



INVENTION-CON 2019

The Place for **Inventors**, **Makers**, & **Entrepreneurs**
USPTO's Inventors Conference · September 13-14 · Alexandria, VA

UNITED STATES
PATENT AND TRADEMARK OFFICE

uspto

Leveraging your Intellectual Property in the Marketplace



“In invention, I see America. I see her past, and I also see her future ... And in inventors, I see the fundamental traits of the American character: grit, imagination, perseverance, and the willingness to take risks.”

- Director Andrei Iancu

Speech at the Driving American
Innovation Policy Conference

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Leveraging your Intellectual Property in the Marketplace



Leveraging your Intellectual Property in the Marketplace

Agenda

Friday, September 13, 2019

- 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.** **Registration**
- 8:30 - 8:45 a.m.** **Introduction/welcome**
NaThanya Ferguson, Supervisory Innovation Development Program Specialist, USPTO
Sean Wilkerson, Innovation Development Program Manager, USPTO
- 8:45 - 9:00 a.m.** **USPTO leadership greetings**
Laura Peter, Deputy Director of USPTO
Andy Faile, Deputy Commissioner for Patent Operations
Mary Boney Denison, Commissioner for Trademarks
- 9 - 9:45 a.m.** **Patents, Trademarks, and Copyrights: An overview of intellectual property**
Gwendolyn Blackwell, Supervisory Patent Examiner, USPTO
- 9:45 - 10:30 a.m.** **Free legal services: Learn about law clinics and pro bono services offered to inventors**
Jim Brookshire, Executive Director of the Federal Circuit Bar Association
Kiri Lee Sharon, Senior Counsel at Foley & Lardner LLP
David G. Henry, Professor of Patent Law and Entrepreneurship, Baylor University
Moderator: *John Kirkpatrick*, Patent Pro Bono Administrator & Patent Attorney, USPTO
- 10:30 - 10:45 a.m.** **Break / resource booths**
- 10:45 - 11:45 a.m.** **We're the government and we can help: Learn about available government resources that support inventors**
Nirav Rajpara, Economic Development Specialist, Small Business Administration (SBA)
NaThanya Ferguson, Supervisory Innovation Development Program Specialist, USPTO
Moderator: *Dennis Forbes*, Innovation Development Program Manager, USPTO

11:45 a.m. - 1 p.m.

Lunch break

(A list of dining options will be made available at the registration desk.)

1 - 2 p.m.

Moving from inventor to entrepreneur: Learn about what inventors face when becoming entrepreneurs; from building your business plan to the importance of marketing.

Dara Trujillo, Chief Marketing Officer, SLC Holdings

Howie Busch, Inventor and Entrepreneur

Jose Colucci-Rios, Southeast Regional Manager, National Institute of Standards and Technology

Moderator: *Elizabeth Dougherty*, Atlantic Outreach Liaison, USPTO

2 - 3:00 p.m.

Keynote presentation

Kavita Shukla, CEO, The Freshglow Co.

3 - 3:30 p.m.

Break / resource booths open

3:30 - 4:30 p.m.

Swim with the Sharks: Learn how national exposure changes your business

Aaron Tweedie, CEO of Man-PACK.com

Krista Woods, Entrepreneur and Director of STINK Operations

Zach Brown, Owner, Moki Doorstep Corp.

Moderator: *Howie Busch*, Inventor and Entrepreneur

4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

Global Marketplace: Learn about the USPTO IP attaché program and how it helps inventors globally

Dominic Keating, Director of the Intellectual Property (IP) Attaché Program, USPTO

Dorian Mazurkevich, Attorney-Advisor, Office of Policy and International Affairs, USPTO

Elaine Wu, Senior Counsel for China, Office of Policy and International Affairs, USPTO

Moderator: *Karin L. Ferriter*, Deputy Chief Policy Officer, USPTO

4:30 - 5:30 p.m.

One-on-one assistance

(Sign up at the registration desk to meet 1-on-1 with a patent examiner for answers to your questions about the patent examination process. Limited appointments will be available on a first-come, first-served basis.)

5:30 - 6 p.m.

Networking at resource booths

Saturday, September 14, 2019

- 8:45 - 9 a.m.** **Opening remarks**
Len Tran, Pro Se Assistance Coordinator, USPTO
Dennis Forbes, Innovation Development Program Manager, USPTO
- 9 - 10 a.m.** **We did it, you can too: Learning from successful inventors**
Ruth Young-Loaeza, CEO & Founder Genius On Development
Kyle Snowberger, Inventor
Cedric Cobb, President and CEO, Best Wardrobe Solutions
Mike Steele, Founder and owner, Motobriiz LLC
Moderator: *Robert Hodge*, Supervisory Patent Examiner, USPTO
- 10 - 10:45 a.m.** **Target Funding: Learn how to design a target funding roadmap**
Kedma Ough, MBA, Small business champion
- 10:45 - 11:15 a.m.** **Funding solutions for everyday inventors: Learn about ways to fund your idea**
Lindsey Brooks, CEO and Founder, Boardwalk Holdings Corporation
Dara Trujillo, Chief Marketing Officer, SLC Holdings
- 11:15 - 11:30 a.m.** **Break**
- 11:30 a.m. - 12:15 p.m.** **Branding yourself in today's market: Learn why your brand matters and how to make it grow**
Steven W. Heller, Esq., "The Professor," The Brand Liaison
Craig Morris, Managing Attorney for Trademark Outreach, USPTO
Mahe Rangareddy, CFO/CTO, Alpha Omega Integration
Moderator: *Scott Baldwin*, Senior Staff Attorney, Office of Trademark Quality Review and Training, USPTO
- 12:15 - 1:15 p.m.** **Lunch break**
(A list of dining options will be made available at the registration desk.)
- 1:15 - 2:15 p.m.** **Licensing: Understand why and when to license your ideas**
Steven W. Heller, Esq., "The Professor," The Brand Liaison
Raymond Van Dyke, D.C. Chapter Chair of the Licensing Executives Society and founder of Van Dyke Law
Moderator: *Chris Katopis*, Deputy Chief Communications Officer, USPTO

2:15 - 3:15 p.m.

Protecting my IP in a virtual market: Learn how artificial intelligence is helping small business

Daniel Shapiro, Director of Brand Intelligence

Steven Thrasher, Patent Attorney

Frank Cullen, Vice President of U.S. Intellectual Property (IP) Policy, U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center

Moderator: *Susan B. Allen*, Attorney Advisor, USPTO

3:15 - 4:15 p.m.

Open question and answer with speakers

(This panel will include any speakers who wish to answer general questions from attendees about topics from the conference)

4:15 - 4:30 p.m.

Closing remarks

A message from the director of the USPTO



Intellectual property resources in your area

By Andrei Iancu, Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the U.S. Patent and Trademark Office

Providing entrepreneurs, small businesses, and independent inventors with access to intellectual property (IP) resources is one of the major priorities for the USPTO. These entities are vital to our country's economy, but they often don't have the same resources that larger entities can leverage to protect their innovations. Because of that, the USPTO oversees several programs to assist with free or reduced-cost help in applying

for patents, including the Patent Pro Bono Program, the Pro Se Assistance Program, the Certified Law School Clinic Program, and Patent and Trademark Resource Centers. That's all in addition to the reduced filing fees we charge to small and micro entities.

Recently, we updated our website to make many of these resources easier to find. Take a look! The "Find help in your area" link under the "New to IP?" area at the top of the USPTO homepage takes users to a map of the United States where they can select [state-specific resource pages](#) and [regional USPTO office pages](#). From free legal assistance to listings of local inventor clubs, there's a large array of helpful programs. In addition, we've added regional event filters to our main [USPTO events calendar](#) so you can easily find upcoming events in your local area. Overall, we updated more than 60 pages, and over the next few months, we will be gathering public feedback in order to continue making even more helpful changes to our website.

Under-resourced independent inventors and small businesses may be particularly interested in securing free legal representation to help them protect their inventions using the Patent Pro Bono Program. Located across the country, each of the 21 local nonprofit pro bono programs matches inventors with volunteer patent attorneys to help them navigate the process for obtaining a patent. Since the program began, over 1,900 inventors have been matched with registered patent practitioners, and currently more than 1,500 attorneys are available to volunteer through the program.

Another way for inventors and entrepreneurs to secure free legal services is through the [Law School Clinic Certification Program](#). Currently, there are 60 participating law school clinics where law students draft and file patent or trademark applications for clients under the supervision of their law school faculty. Since its inception, over 4,000 law students have participated in the program and have filed more than 850 patent applications and more than 3,300 trademark applications for clients.

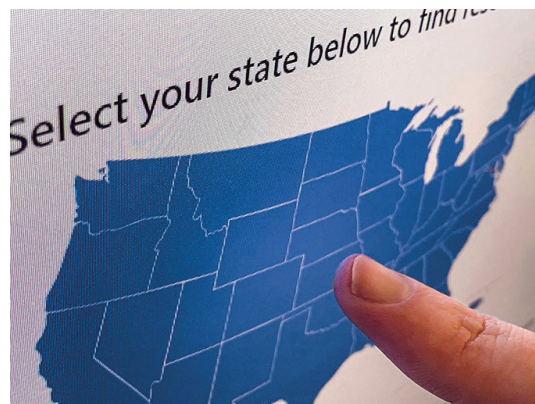
Some independent inventors and small businesses choose to file patent applications without the assistance of a registered patent attorney or agent—also known as “pro se” filing. We have tools to assist pro se filers, as well as a dedicated USPTO team available to answer filing questions and explain the process. To learn more, visit the [Pro Se Assistance Program](#) page of the USPTO website.

We also offer independent inventors and small businesses reduced patent filing fees for “micro entities” and “small entities.” Entities that meet the micro-entity requirements are eligible for a 75 percent reduction on most fees, and small entity status offers a 50 percent fee reduction. View the full [USPTO fee schedule](#).

Patent and Trademark Resource Centers (PTRCs) are another great way to get IP help. This nationwide network consists of public, state, and academic libraries designated by the USPTO to support the public with trademark and patent assistance. They provide the human touch in helping inventors and small businesses find the information they need to protect their IP. Please note that PTRC representatives are not attorneys, and they cannot provide legal advice. [Find a PTRC in your state](#).

These are only some examples of the various services we offer to help inventors and entrepreneurs protect their IP. Visit the [USPTO website](#) to learn about even more resources.

American history is filled with remarkable stories of inventors and entrepreneurs who worked hard, took risks, persevered, dared to go where others would not, and ultimately overcame tremendous odds to succeed. We will continue to encourage the sparks of inventors’ ideas to grow into the flames of world-changing innovation.



Recent USPTO website updates make finding local resources and events easier

Webpages referenced above

State-specific resource pages - <https://www.uspto.gov/learning-and-resources/patents-help/resources-state>

USPTO regional offices - <https://www.uspto.gov/about-us/uspto-office-locations>

USPTO events calendar - <https://www.uspto.gov/events>

Patent Pro Bono Program - <https://www.uspto.gov/PatentProBono>

Law School Clinic Certification Program - <https://www.uspto.gov/LawSchoolClinic>

Pro Se Assistance Program - <https://www.uspto.gov/ProSePatents>

USPTO fee schedule - <https://www.uspto.gov/fees>

Find a PTRC in your state - <https://www.uspto.gov/PTRC>

USPTO website - <https://www.uspto.gov>

Resource Booth Descriptions

Department of Defense – Small Business Innovation Research Program

Congress established the Small Business Innovation Research (SBIR) program in 1982 to fund research and development (R&D) by U.S. owned and operated businesses of less than 500 employees. SBIR, the nation's largest source of early-stage technology financing, is administered by the Small Business Administration through 11 federal agencies and is funded at more than \$2 billion annually. The Department of Defense (DoD) accounts for more than half of the federal government's total SBIR/STTR program.

The DoD SBIR program is made up of 13 participating Components: Army, Navy, Air Force, Missile Defense Agency, Defense Advanced Research Projects Agency, Joint Science and Technology Office for Chemical and Biological Defense, US Special Operations Command, Defense Threat Reduction Agency, National Geospatial-Intelligence Agency, Defense Logistics Agency, Defense Microelectronics Activity, the Office of Secretary of Defense, and the Defense Health Program.

Office of Petitions and Inventors Assistance Center

The Office of Petitions (OPET), which is part of the Office of Patent Examination Policy, reviews and decides petitions, requests, and related inquiries, regarding the filing of patent applications, revival of abandoned applications, reinstatement of expired patents, withdrawal of patent applications from issue, small entity entitlement, review of previous decisions of the Technology Centers, suspension of regulations, questions not specifically provided for by regulations, and other petitionable matters.

OPET also manages the Inventors Assistance Center (IAC), which provides patent information and services to the public. The IAC is staffed by former Supervisory Patent Examiners and Primary examiners who answer general questions concerning patent examining policy and procedure.

Patent Applications Assistance Unit (AAU)

The Application Assistance Unit handles a broad range of questions and issues pertaining to pre-examination processing of patent applications by the Office of Patent Application Processing and the post-examination processing of patent applications by the Office of Data Management. For example, the AAU can provide assistance with questions related to the status of an application that is in the pre-examination or the post-examination phase of processing, filling receipts and missing parts letters.

Patents Ombudsman

The Patents Ombudsman provides assistance to applicants and attorneys throughout the application process including initial filing, patent examination, and post-examination. We assist applicants when the normal processing has stalled, helping to get applications back on track. The Patents Ombudsman Program is not intended to circumvent normal communication between applicants or their representatives and examiners or supervisory patent examiners (SPEs) or TC directors.

Patent and Trademark Resource Center (PTRC)

Patent and Trademark Resource Centers (PTRCs) are a nationwide network of public, state, and academic libraries designated by the USPTO to disseminate patent and trademark information. PTRCs support the diverse intellectual property needs of the public. PTRC librarians can help you learn to conduct a preliminary patent search or a preliminary trademark search. Examiners search tools are also available at PTRCs.

Patents Pro Se Assistance

The Pro Se Assistance Program is the USPTO's comprehensive pilot to expand outreach to inventors who file patent applications without the assistance of a registered patent attorney or agent (also known as "pro se" filing).

Procurement Opportunities for Small Business Owners (USPTO's CFO, Procurement Office)

The USPTO's Office of Procurement is committed to ensure small businesses have maximum practical procurement opportunities to become both prime contractors and subcontractors. Ongoing outreach incorporates innovative procurement technologies and strategies across a variety of contract vehicles, in order to further develop and expand industry partnerships. We are committed to integrating small businesses into our operations and providing them with opportunities to contribute to the future of domestic and global intellectual property protection.

www.uspto.gov/about-us/vendor-information/small-business-vendors-information

Small Business Administration (SBA)

The Small Business Administration is the federal agency dedicated to creating and sustaining small businesses. Whether you are just starting your business or looking for growth opportunities, the SBA offers services to assist including: capital, ranging from micro-financing to term-loans to venture capital; counseling, with free business counseling from our national network of resource partners and district offices; and contracting programs to help small businesses access their fair share of federal contracts.

Trademark Assistance Center (TAC)

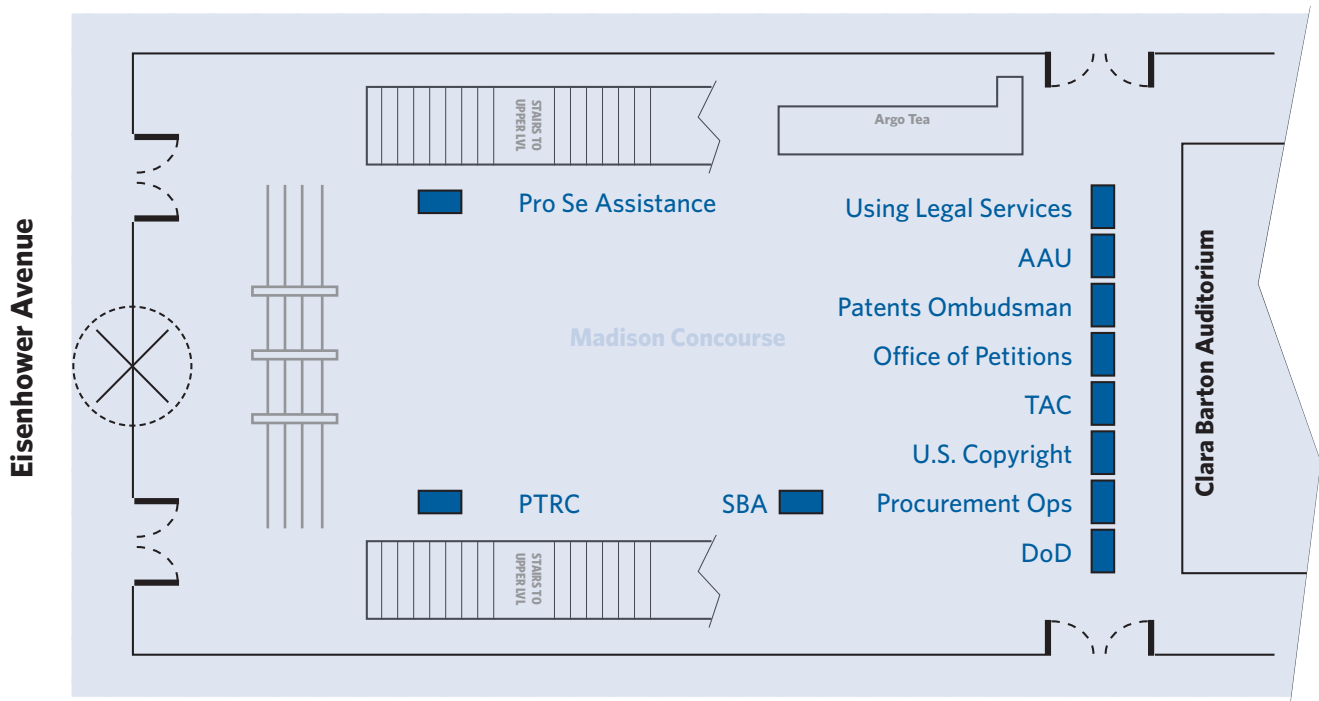
The Trademark Assistance Center (TAC) provides trademark customers with a wide range of information, through multiple communication channels (phone, email, and in-person walk-ins). Services include responding to inquiries about the application process, helping the navigation of the website, and fulfilling requests for trademark literature and publications. However, TAC does not provide any legal advice; for example, TAC may not advise an applicant prior to filing as to the potential registrability of any trademark.

Copyright Office (Library of Congress)

The Copyright Office is the official U.S. government body that maintains records of copyright registration in the United States. It became a separate department of the Library of Congress in 1897 after the first Copyright law was passed by Congress in 1870. The primary functions of the office are to administer the copyright laws of the United States, as set forth in the Copyright Act; to make registrations of copyrighted works and record documents related to those registrations; and to advise and assist the U.S. Congress on copyright matters.

Using Legal Services

The Using Legal Services booth will provide information regarding pro bono services affiliated with the USPTO, via the Patent Pro Bono Program and the Law School Clinic Certification Program. General information on reporting and preventing scams will be available.



United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) Leadership

Laura Peter - Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Deputy Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office

Laura Peter is the Deputy under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Deputy Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). In this role, she is responsible for all agency operations and managing approximately 13,000 employees.

Prior to joining the USPTO, Peter was the Deputy General Counsel of A10 Networks, where she oversaw daily legal matters related to commercial agreements, litigation, and intellectual property (IP) portfolio development. In 2014, she helped shepherd the company through its initial public offering.

Peter has practiced IP law for over 20 years. Previously, she was Vice President and General Counsel of Immersion Corporation, where she led all aspects of the company's legal issues, including its IP portfolio. She was also Assistant General Counsel and Director of Intellectual Property at Foundry Networks, where she built a successful patent portfolio and litigation program. She began her career as a commercial and IP litigator at Townsend, Townsend and Crew (now Kilpatrick Townsend & Stockton LLP).

Peter received a Bachelor of Science in industrial engineering from Cornell University and a master's in public policy from the University of Chicago. She also holds a Juris Doctor from Santa Clara University School of Law and a Master of Law degree in international business law from King's College London.

Mary Boney Denison - Commissioner for Trademarks

Mary Boney Denison is the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) Commissioner for Trademarks. Denison oversees all aspects of the Trademarks organization, including policy, operations and budget relating to trademark examination, registration, and maintenance.

Denison joined the USPTO in 2011 as Deputy Commissioner for Trademark Operations where she was responsible for USPTO trademark application, legal examination, and registration processes. She has led outreach to the trademark legal community, small businesses, and applicants without legal counsel, and has been an active participant in meetings with the world's largest trademark offices, promoting projects aimed at harmonizing trademark practices and procedures. While at the USPTO she has initiated several projects to enhance and expand internal and external communications as well as employee career development. The Commissioner is actively engaged in moving the office towards implementing mandatory electronic filing for trademarks, decluttering the Trademark Register, updating the IT systems, and enhancing the customer experience.

Before joining the USPTO, Denison practiced law in the area of trademark prosecution and litigation, as a founding partner of Manelli Denison & Selter PLLC in Washington, D.C., from 1996 to 2011, and as a partner of Graham & James LLP, where she practiced for 10 years. She served as a member of the Board of Directors of the International Trademark Association (INTA) for three years, and also served a three-year term on the USPTO's Trademark Public Advisory Committee (TPAC).

Denison holds degrees from Duke University and the University of North Carolina School of Law from which she received the UNC School of Law Distinguished Alumni Award in 2016.

Andrew Faile - Deputy Commissioner for Patent Operations

As the Deputy Commissioner for Patent Operations, Andrew Faile is responsible for coordinating the examination of approximately 600,000 patent application filings annually, including proper execution of examination practice and procedure, as well as ensuring timely and quality customer service to our external stakeholders. He leads five Assistant Deputy Commissioners, 30 Technology Center (TC) Group Directors across nine Patent Technology Centers, the Central Reexamination Unit, over 600 Supervisory Patent Examiners and more than 8,000 highly skilled scientists, engineers, and design examiners, as well as support service employees to facilitate examination of applications. Andy was the Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Patent Operations for the Electrical Discipline and has 30 years of experience in patent examining and operations management. He first joined the USPTO in 1989 as a patent examiner in the areas of cellular telephony, radio frequency communications, and cable television. In 1994, he earned an examiner master's rating in telecommunications. He was awarded the Department of Commerce Silver Medal for his work on a joint management/union task force in charge of modernizing the examiner production system, and in 2014 was awarded the Presidential Meritorious Rank Award.

USPTO and External Speakers

Susan Allen - Attorney Advisor, Office of Policy and International Affairs, USPTO

Attorney Advisor Susan Allen serves in the Office of Policy and International Affairs (OPIA) at the USPTO. She focuses on copyright policy matters and is particularly interested in issues involving the intersection of copyright and technology. Through her work with the Department of Commerce's Internet Policy Task Force, Allen engages with stakeholders about ways the government can help promote a more robust and collaborative digital marketplace for copyright-protected works. Her portfolio includes Europe, Middle East/North Africa (MENA), and the Commonwealth of Independent States (CIS); the Commerce Department's Internet Policy Task Force; open access/open licensing; voluntary stakeholder initiatives; and G7/G20 issues. She contributed to two reports issued by the Department of Commerce's Internet Policy Task Force: White Paper on Remixes, First Sale, and Statutory Damages (January 2016) and Fostering the Advancement of the Internet of Things (January 2017).

Allen has more than 14 years of experience as an intellectual property attorney. Prior to joining OPIA, she worked in private practice, helping clients protect and enforce their trademarks, copyrights, domain names, privacy, and publicity rights, and at the USPTO as a trademark examining attorney. She is a graduate of William and Mary Law School, holds a European Masters of Law and Economics (EMLE) from the University of Hamburg, and completed her undergraduate economics degree at the University of California, Davis.

Scott Baldwin - Senior Staff Attorney in the Office of Trademark Quality Review and Training, USPTO

Scott Baldwin is a senior staff attorney in the Office of Trademark Quality Review and Training (OTQRT). Prior to joining OTQRT, he was an attorney in the USPTO's Global Intellectual Property Academy, where he conducted capacity-building programs in the United States and around the world for intellectual property protection and enforcement. Prior to that, he served as a trademark attorney with the agency's Office of Policy and International Affairs, where he handled policy matters relating to trademark issues in the United States and abroad and provided technical assistance to foreign governments that wanted to develop or improve their trademark systems; he also served as a trademark examining attorney. In private practice, he worked in the law firm of Fulbright and Jaworski in Washington, D.C.

Gwendolyn Blackwell - Supervisory Patent Examiner, USPTO

Gwendolyn Blackwell is a supervisory patent examiner (SPE) in the USPTO's Technology Center 1700, Chemical and Materials Engineering. Blackwell delivers lectures to new examiners at the Patent Training Academy on a variety of topics concerning effective patent examination processes. She also has completed a nine month detail as a resource SPE at the Elijah J. McCoy Midwest Regional Office in Detroit, where she helped develop the K-12 outreach program. Blackwell began her career at the USPTO in December 2000 as an examiner in TC 1700, specifically addressing applications in areas such as semiconductors, nonstructural laminates, glass substrates with coatings, and artificial flora and fauna. She became a primary examiner in 2008 and in 2012 became a SPE, later supervising an art unit of 13 examiners in TC 1700.

Blackwell's experience at the USPTO also includes assignments at the Patent Trial and Appeal Board, in the Office of Patent Cooperation Treaty, and service as a training assistant and supervisory patent examiner at the Patent Training Academy. Blackwell received a Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering from the University of Maryland, Baltimore County. She also received a Juris Doctor from the University of Maryland at Baltimore.

Lindsey Brooks - CEO and Founder, Boardwalk Holdings Corporation

Lindsey Brooks enjoys working on new product ideas that help make people's lives better. She is the chair of several thriving research and beauty companies in Seattle, including the Boardwalk Holdings Corporation and the Retail Consumer Science, a digital research and consumer product company that uses Facebook marketing and media to power direct response campaigns.

Brooks is responsible for creating, contributing to, and managing strategy on many of the highest grossing campaigns and rollouts of products in the "As Seen on TV" Infomercials, including the Shamwow, Schticky, Smoooothaway, Slap Chop, and many more. In addition, she has coached spokesmen including Hulk Hogan, Gordon Ramsey, Vince Offer, and George Foreman. Internationally, Brooks created and operates a very successful sourcing and manufacturing company in China, where she has lived and worked several years.

Dedicated to researching and studying consumer choices for more than 15 years, Brooks' team has become one of the most agile and knowledgeable in the industry. Her white papers and commentary have been noted on the international stage in many books, articles, and engagements around the world.

Brooks is also chair of the board of Runway to Freedom, which assists domestic violence victims in Seattle; a board member of the United Inventors Association; and she has been a Judge at INPEX, the largest invention convention in America.

One of Brooks' favorite quotes comes from American motivational speaker Zig Ziglar: "Don't be distracted by criticism. The only taste of success some people get is to take a bite out of you."

Jim Brookshire - Executive Director, Federal Circuit Bar Association

As the executive director of the Federal Circuit Bar Association, Jim Brookshire heads the annual Bench & Bar conference for attorneys nationwide. He is skilled in policy consensus building, dispute resolution, and facilitation in Virginia, Washington D.C., and Maryland.

Zach Brown - Owner, Moki Doorstep Corp.

Zachary Brown is the international award-winning inventor of the Moki Doorstep, which hooks to the U-shaped door latch in a vehicle and allows users to safely load and unload items on the roof. After a very successful Kickstarter campaign, he made one of the largest deals in Shark Tank history and partnered with Rightline Gear to bring the invention to market. Together, Rightline Gear and Brown improved the initial design to create the Rightline Gear Moki Door Step.

The Moki Doorstep has encountered several knockoffs, and Brown has been successfully combatting them with unconventional methods. As a crowdfunding and startup advisor, he is passionate about giving back and helping other creators succeed. Brown is also a firefighter-paramedic with a love of the outdoors.

Howie Busch - Inventor and Entrepreneur

Howie Busch is a seasoned inventor, entrepreneur, advisor, and attorney who has experienced success in a number of related businesses. In June of 2017, he launched a Kickstarter campaign for the DudeRobe that was fully funded in just two days. Within one week of the start of the business, the head of casting for Shark Tank tweeted at him. Three months later, he was pitching to the Sharks.

At Billy Blaze Design, Busch designs and develops innovative products, which he typically licenses to leaders in related industries. Additionally, he consults for and advises numerous companies, leveraging his vast network of friends and colleagues to their mutual advantage.

Cedric Cobb - President and CEO, Best Wardrobe Solutions

Cedric Cobb developed a passion for business as a teenager after his first visit to a flea market, where his mother taught him how to properly greet people and negotiate prices. "I fell in love with business and connecting people's needs to a product or service."

Growing up as the oldest of four in a single-parent household, Cobb drew inspiration from his mother, a professional seamstress and entrepreneur for more than 30 years. He pursued an education, worked in corporate America, and ultimately become an entrepreneur himself.

Cobb invented the "Best Pocket Square Holder" to solve the age-old problem of how to secure a pocket square in a man's chest pocket. He then founded his men's fashion technology company, Best Wardrobe Solutions, which concentrates on the details of men's wardrobe, offering custom accessories, consulting services, and an innovative free mobile app.

Dr. José Colucci-Rios - Southeast Regional Manager, National Institute of Standards and Technology

Dr. José Colucci manages the National Institute of Standards and Technology southeast region, which comprises seven coastal states (North Carolina, South Carolina, Georgia, Florida, Alabama, Mississippi, and Louisiana), inland Tennessee, and the island of Puerto Rico. He oversees a national network of innovations in the mechanical, engineering, and plumbing areas.

Colucci is a former University of Puerto Rico (UPR)-Mayagüez campus professor, where he held several administrative positions, including department director, associate research and development dean, and research and development center director, in which position he supervised the university's intellectual property program and gave presentations on the motivations for seeking a patent. In addition, Colucci worked at Union Carbide for eight years in a variety of capacities. He was a member of company's hydro formylation licensing team for two years, worked in a manufacturing environment for four years providing technical support in the areas of solvents and coatings, and oversaw manufacturing from the business perspective for three years, including new product development in the Specialty Chemicals Division. He also served as a patent examiner in the in the fuel cells and battery art unit at the USPTO for more than three years.

Colucci has received several awards, including UPR Distinguished Researcher, Puerto Rico's Distinguished CHEME and R&D 100, 2011 UPRB Distinguished Scholar Lecture, the 2009 EPA Environmental Quality Award, the USPTO Productivity and Docket management award, and the UPRM Distinguished Professor.

**Frank Cullen - Vice President of U.S. Intellectual Property (IP) Policy,
U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center**

As vice president of U.S. IP policy at the U.S. Chamber of Commerce's Global Innovation Policy Center, Frank W. Cullen, Jr. directs the center's domestic programs for promoting and protecting IP rights in both the online and physical markets. He guides the efforts to advance IP enforcement and deter trademark counterfeiting and copyright piracy.

Cullen began his career in Los Angeles, working as a consultant and later vice president for FCA Company, a full-service public affairs and government relations firm. In 1989, he was appointed public relations director for the city of Palm Springs, California, and conceived and implemented a promotional campaign featuring then-Mayor Sonny Bono. Subsequently, he served as director of Bono for U.S. Senate '92; he also provided consulting services to a wide array of clients in the Palm Springs region.

When Bono was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives in 1994, he asked Cullen to join him to direct his communications shop, a position he held until Bono's untimely death in 1998. He then became Congresswoman Mary Bono's communications director. After one year, he was promoted to chief of staff, a position he held for 15 years.

An accomplished communicator and writer, Cullen has appeared as a guest on numerous TV and radio shows, including the Today Show, Good Morning America, CBS This Morning, Larry King Live, ABC Radio, and CBS Radio. Cullen provided political analysis and election coverage for KESQ TV, KMIR TV, and The Desert Sun newspaper and guest editorials that appeared in newspapers in California and Washington, D.C.

Cullen also worked for legendary director Francis Ford Coppola at his Zoetrope Studios in Hollywood, California, and continues to have an avid appreciation for cinema and the performing arts.

He is a graduate of the University of Southern California, with a Bachelor of Fine Arts degree from the School of Cinema and Television.

Elizabeth Dougherty - Atlantic Outreach Liaison, USPTO

As the Atlantic Outreach Liaison for the USPTO, Elizabeth Dougherty carries out the strategic direction of the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO, and is responsible for leading the USPTO's East Coast stakeholder engagement. Focusing on the region and actively engaging with the community, Ms. Dougherty ensures the USPTO's initiatives and programs are tailored to the region's unique ecosystem of industries and stakeholders.

A 27 year veteran of the USPTO, Dougherty previously served as the senior advisor to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO. In this role, she worked closely across the agency's leadership to implement the policies and priorities for the USPTO. She began her career at the USPTO as a patent examiner after graduating from The Catholic University of America with a bachelor's degree in physics. While a patent examiner, Dougherty went on to obtain her Juris Doctor from The Columbus School of Law at The Catholic University of America and served as a senior legal advisor in the Office of Patent Legal Administration for a significant part of her career. Over the years, she has also served in the USPTO's Office of Petitions, the Office of Innovation Development, and the Office of Government Affairs.

Dougherty has dedicated much of her career to the USPTO's outreach and education programs, focusing on small businesses, startups and entrepreneurs. In this effort she has developed, implemented, and supervised programs that support the independent inventor community, small businesses, entrepreneurs, and the intellectual property interests of colleges and universities. Similarly, Dougherty has spearheaded a number of special projects with federal, state and local governments, and private organizations to promote and support invention and innovation in the United States.

Dougherty is a member of the Virginia Bar, the Giles S. Rich American Inn of Court, the Pauline Newman American Inn of Court, the American Bar Association, the Federal Circuit Bar Association, the American Intellectual Property Law Association, the Patent and Trademark Office Society, the Supervisory Patent Examiners and Classifiers Organization, Women in Science and Engineering, Federally Employed Women, and the Network of Executive Women.

NaThanya Ferguson - Supervisory Innovation Development Program Manager, USPTO

NaThanya Ferguson is a supervisory innovation development program manager in the USPTO's Office of Chief Communications Officer, which focuses on outreach and engagement of independent inventors, small businesses, entrepreneurs, university inventors, and underserved communities across America.

Ferguson joined the USPTO in 1989. During her 30 year tenure at the agency, she has worked as a paralegal specialist in the Patents technology centers, lead patent analyst for the Patent Reengineering Lab, management and program analyst in the Science and Technology Information Center, contracting officer technical representative in the Office of Data Management, and project manager in the Office of the Deputy Commissioner of Patent Operations.

Ferguson has received numerous awards, including a Department of Commerce Gold Medal in 2015 for her contribution to the innovative and collaborative implementation of the First Inventor to File statutory provisions of the America Invents Act, a Department of Commerce Distinguished Career Award in 2011 for continued outstanding service, and a Silver Medal Award in 1999 for her contribution to the development and implementation of the Patent Reengineering initiative.

Ferguson holds a Bachelor of Science degree in Business and Management from Johns Hopkins University and a Master's Certificate in project management from Management Concepts and Regis University

Karin L. Ferriter - Deputy Chief Policy Officer, USPTO

Karin Ferriter started working at the USPTO and served as a primary patent examiner in what is now Technology Center 3600, primarily in the art areas of land and motor vehicles.

In 1995, she became a legal advisor in what is now the Office of Patent Legal Administration, where she examined applications for patent term extension under the Hatch-Waxman Act, reviewed petitions for access and other matters, drafted notices of proposed rulemaking and final rules, and wrote revisions to the Manual of Patent Examining Procedure. In addition, Ferriter participated in negotiations leading to the Diplomatic Conference of the Geneva Act of the Hague Agreement for the International Registration of Industrial Designs, lectured on patent law and evidence and helped review disciplinary matters.

In 2005, Ferriter moved to the Office of Policy and International Affairs, where she used her experience with patent examination and patent term extension to provide training to foreign government officials, participate in negotiating the U.S.-Korea Free Trade Agreement, monitor implementation of trade agreements, represent the United States in many international meetings, and a variety of other matters. Ferriter was detailed to the Office of the United States Trade Representative, Mission to the World Trade Organization, in Geneva, Switzerland from 2010-2015. She was appointed Deputy Chief Policy Officer, of the Office of Policy and International Affairs in 2016.

She has received numerous awards, including two for leadership and excellence in implementation of the American Inventors Protection Act of 1999, and a Department of State Meritorious Honor Award for her part in negotiating the World Health Organization Pandemic Influenza Surveillance and Response Network (2011). In addition, Ferriter received a Patent and Trademark Office Society Outstanding Service ("Ant") award in 2000. A member of the Virginia Bar, Ferriter holds a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering from the University of Massachusetts Lowell and a Juris Doctor from what is now the Antonin Scalia Law School.

Dennis Forbes - Innovation Development Program Manager, USPTO

Dennis Forbes is an innovation development outreach and program specialist at USPTO's Office of the Chief Communications Officer, where he actively develops and launches outreach engagement programs that foster meaningful patent education awareness for independent inventors, small businesses, entrepreneurs, makers, universities, and K-12 students. In addition, he conducts interactive informational presentations of design Intellectual property products for USPTO visitors.

Forbes holds a Master of Public Administration degree from American University in Washington, D.C. and a Master of Arts and Bachelor of Arts from North Carolina Central University in Durham, North Carolina.

Steven W. Heller, Esq. - "The Professor," The Brand Liaison

With degrees in both law and accounting, and 25 years in licensing and business development, Heller combined his vision, experience and strong industry contacts to create The Brand Liaison. Since its formation in 2011, The Brand Liaison has quickly gained prominence as one of the licensing industry's leading boutique agencies, with a stellar reputation and strong management team. The staff is among the most diverse in the industry, with experts across a broad range of product classifications.

Throughout his career, Heller has been active in all aspects of intellectual property, including the worldwide licensing and enforcement of various world-famous properties, representing licensors and licensees in deals involving fashion brands such as Gloria Vanderbilt, Nautica, Gitano, and Oleg Cassini, and properties owned by Disney, MGM, Warner Brothers, the NFL, NBA, NCAA, and FIFA. As part of these licensing programs and brand extension strategies, he has also worked with major retailers such as Macy's, Target, Walmart, Hot Topic, Jo-Ann's, David's Bridal, and many others.

Also known as "The Professor," Heller is a public speaker and a professor of business and law at both the graduate and undergraduate level. He has conducted seminars and lectures on business and law topics such as trademarks and licensing, franchising, and international business. He is an author and presenter of seminars on "Trademarks, Patents and Copyrights" and "How to Use Licensing and Franchising as a Means of Business Expansion."

Heller graduated cum laude in the top five percent of his class at Fordham Law School in 1991 and graduated from SUNY Albany in 1987 with dual major in Accounting and Business Administration. He is a licensed attorney and member of the bar in the state of New York.

David G. Henry - Professor

Professor of Patent Law and Entrepreneurship and MBA Instructor in Intellectual Property and Export Control Law (Baylor University School of Law and Hankamer School of Business, respectively) and Registered Patent Attorney Professor David G. Henry, Sr. is a member and Practice Group Chair of the Gray, Reed & McGraw law firm, specializing in patent, trademark and copyright litigation, prosecution, and transactions, as well as export control law.

Professor Henry advises businesses, universities and research institutions on issues, strategies and management of Intellectual Property (Patents, Trademarks and Copyrights). In addition to being an Intellectual Property advisor, Professor Henry litigates in intellectual property cases throughout the United States and North America and processes patent and trademark applications before the United States Patent & Trademark Office, and other international Intellectual Property Offices. He also speaks frequently at professional conferences and business conventions on Intellectual Property and Export Control Law topics.

Robert Hodge - Supervisory Patent Examiner, Pro Se Examination Pilot Art Unit

As a supervisory patent examiner (SPE) detailed to the Pro Se Examination Pilot Art Unit, Robert Hodge serves inventors who file patent applications without the assistance of a registered patent attorney or agent. He previously served as the Pro Se Assistance Program coordinator.

Hodge has also served as a SPE in Technical Center 3600 (supervising examiners who review applications related to clutches, transmissions, and hybrid drive systems), an instructor in the Patent Training Academy, and an assistant special programs examiner in the Patent Cooperation Treaty Legal Affairs Branch.

Prior to beginning his career at the USPTO, he worked in research and development at Teledyne Energy Systems in Hunt Valley, Maryland, where he focused fuel cells and fuel cell test stands, and at Monsanto in St. Louis, Missouri, concentrating on the RoundUp® production process. He also worked on fuel cell technology in the R&D department of the main Volkswagen Factory in Wolfsburg, Germany.

Hodge received his Bachelor of Science in chemical engineering from Rose-Hulman Institute of Technology in Terre Haute, Indiana.

Chris Katopis - Deputy Chief Communications Officer, USPTO

Chris Katopis is responsible for the development and implementation of strategic communications for the USPTO in coordination with the U.S. Department of Commerce and the White House, and he supports and advises the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property. Additionally, he oversees a number of innovation, educational and public outreach initiatives.

He has held a variety of key intellectual property-related legal roles in the federal government, including serving as the USPTO's director of congressional relations, as well as a counsel to the U.S. House Judiciary Subcommittee on Courts and IP. Additionally, he was a judicial law clerk for the Honorable Pauline Newman of the U.S. Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit.

In the private sector, Katopis served as the executive director of the Licensing Executives Society International (LESI), a global society of 10,000 IP, licensing, and valuation professionals. In this role, he oversaw LESI's international IP educational programs, conferences, and the publication of its licensing journal.

Katopis is a former faculty member of the George Mason University School of Law and the assistant director of its Center for the Protection of Intellectual Property. He has been a frequent lecturer on legal matters, including at the George Washington University Law School and The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law.

Katopis received his Bachelor of Science degree from the university of Pennsylvania school of Engineering and Applied Sciences and his Juris Doctor degree from the Temple University School of Law. He is active in a number of bar organizations, the author of numerous articles on patent law, and an inventor with several U.S. patents.

Dominic Keating - Director of the Intellectual Property (IP) Attaché Program, USPTO

Dominic Keating provides legal and policy direction to IP attachés and IP Specialists based in Beijing, Guangzhou, Shanghai, Rio de Janeiro, Lima, New Delhi, Geneva, Bangkok, Kuwait City, Mexico City and Brussels.

From 2006 to 2010, he served as the first IP attaché in the U.S. Embassy in New Delhi, where he promoted high standards of IP protection and enforcement in India and other South Asian countries. He was awarded a Silver Medal by the U.S. Secretary of Commerce for his work.

Keating has also served as a Patent Attorney in the USPTO's Office of International Relations (2003-2006), the IP Attaché at the United States Mission to the World Trade Organization in Geneva (2001-2003), an attorney-advisor in USPTO's Office of Legislative and International Affairs (2000-2001), a patent examiner at the USPTO (1997-2000) and a Trademark examining attorney at the USPTO (1996-1997). Keating has headed numerous U.S. Delegations to the World Trade Organization Trade Related Aspects of Intellectual Property Rights Council and to meetings of the World Intellectual Property Organization.

Keating was an adjunct associate professor at American University Washington College of Law from 2011-2017. He earned his Master of Science Degree in Biotechnology from Johns Hopkins University and he has worked as a scientist for American Cyanamid Corporation.

John Kirkpatrick - Patent Pro Bono Administrator and Patent Attorney, USPTO

John Kirkpatrick is a Patent Pro Bono Administrator and Patent Attorney at the USPTO. He is dedicated to making sure that all inventors have access to the patent system, including those who are financially under-resourced. He works with patent pro bono programs across the nation to guarantee pro bono coverage in all 50 states pursuant to the Leahy-Smith America Invents Act (AIA). Previously, Kirkpatrick served as a patent examiner and was employed by a private intellectual property firm. Kirkpatrick received his undergraduate degree in electrical engineering from Villanova University and graduated cum laude from The Catholic University of America Columbus School of Law. He is a member of the Virginia Bar.

Dorian Mazurkevich - Attorney-Advisor, Office of Policy and International Affairs, USPTO

As an attorney-advisor in the Office of Policy and International Affairs at the USPTO, Dorian Mazurkevich handles intellectual property enforcement issues. He serves as liaison to the World Intellectual Property Organization's Advisory Committee on Enforcement and INTERPOL's Trafficking in Illicit Goods Sub-Directorate.

Mazurkevich previously served as the U.S. government's IP attaché to Latin America, where he was based out of the U.S. Consulate General in Rio de Janeiro, Brazil. Prior to entering government service, Mr. Mazurkevich was a visiting law professor and Fulbright Scholar at the National University of Kyiv in Ukraine, where he lectured on international intellectual property law.

Before his fellowship, Mazurkevich was a lawyer in private practice at Morgan, Lewis & Bockius LLP, with a focus on intellectual property and commercial litigation. He began his legal career as a patent attorney at Akin Gump Strauss & Feld LLP.

Mazurkevich received his Bachelor of Arts from the University of Pennsylvania and his law degree from Temple University School of Law. He previously served as a judicial intern for Chief Judge James Giles of the U.S. District Court for the Eastern District of Pennsylvania, as well as a certified arbitrator for the Municipal Court of Philadelphia.

Craig Morris - Managing Attorney for Trademark Outreach

Craig Morris works within the Office of the Commissioner for Trademarks at the USPTO. Currently, he is the Managing Attorney for trademark educational outreach, spearheading the effort for increased USPTO educational activities in the area of trademark fundamentals. For fourteen years prior, he headed the Trademark Electronic Application System, helping move the Trademark Operation toward a total e-government environment. Morris has been with the USPTO since 1983, previously serving as a law office examining attorney, senior attorney, and managing attorney.

Kedma Ough, MBA - Small Business Champion

Kedma Ough is a recognized alternative funding thought leader and has advised more than 10,000 inventors and entrepreneurs on a wide range of financing options. Over the last 20 years, she has held leadership roles with both the SBA Small Business Development Centers and the Women's Business Centers. Currently, she is a board member with the United Inventors Association and a published author through McGraw Hill. Her book Target Funding is aimed at helping inventors and entrepreneurs find the necessary grants, funds, and resources to scale their dreams.

Ough is a proud fifth-generation entrepreneur whose great-great grandfather peddled various products throughout Ireland.

Nirav Rajpara - Economic Development Specialist, U.S. Small Business Administration

Nirav “Nick” Rajpara collaborates with public and private economic development organizations to develop, bolster, and support informational initiatives that aid and assist small business and entrepreneurs across the national capital region. He is the program manager for the U.S. Small Business Administration Emerging Leaders Program, a CEO academy that guides small business leaders on scaling and growing their enterprises. He also conducts HUBZone site inspections for certified HUBZone firms in the capital region.

Rajpara holds masters’ degrees in business administration and public policy from Pepperdine University and a Bachelor of Science degree from the University of California, Riverside.

Mahe Rangareddy - CFO/CTO Alpha Omega Integration

Mahe Rangareddy is the chief financial officer and chief technology officer of Alpha Omega Integration, a systems integrator servicing both the federal government and commercial customers. Alpha Omega has been recognized as one of the fastest-growing companies in both Virginia and the Washington, D.C. area. Since 2014, Rangareddy has led the mergers and acquisitions activities of Alpha Omega Integration, consistently working towards the transformation of Alpha Omega to an “as-a-service” company. He focuses on building the corporate brand in the GovCon marketplace through both traditional and digital techniques.

Rangareddy serves as a board member of the Johns Hopkins Carey Business School Dean’s Alumni Advisory Board, where he mentors students in the Global MBA program, concentrating on the effective use of personal branding in career development. He also serves as an advisor to the Dean’s office, working to leverage the Johns Hopkins University brand to position the Carey Business School MBA program in emerging markets, including India, China, and the Middle East.

Prior to joining Alpha Omega, he successfully led the digital transformation program for the American Institute of Architects. His career also includes the modernization and transformation of the District of Columbia Department of Motor Vehicles through the introduction of several of the country’s first online services, which created significant operational efficiencies and enhanced customer experience.

Rangareddy received his Bachelors of Engineering from the University of Madras, India. He earned his Master of Business Administration from Johns Hopkins University Carey Business School.

Kiri Lee Sharon - Senior Counsel, Foley & Lardner LLP

Kiri Lee Sharon counsels clients on intellectual property matters, including patent prosecution, defense of infringement allegations, patent validity, due diligence investigations, enforcement, freedom to operate, and litigation. She is a member of the firm’s Mechanical & Electromechanical Technologies and Electronics Practices and Patent Office Trials Group. She has significant experience with USPTO proceedings, including ex parte appeals and reissues.

Sharon prepares and prosecutes utility patent applications across a broad range of electromechanical and materials technology areas, including medical devices, automotive systems, and control systems engineering. She has additional experience with printers, battery packaging, anti-counterfeit devices, semiconductor packaging, optics, microscopy, and industrial textiles.

Sharon also has an active design patent practice, including counseling and preparing design patent applications for mobile devices, printing technologies, and consumer goods. She was previously seconded to a large Japanese company to work with their in-house department on printing technologies.

Prior to joining Foley, she worked as a systems engineer for a large multinational defense corporation, where she performed systems integration.

During law school, Sharon was a judicial intern for the Honorable Henry H. Kennedy, Jr. of the United States District Court for the District of Columbia. She also worked as an undergraduate research fellow at the National Institute of Standards and Technology, where she investigated curing of inorganic compositions.

Daniel Shapiro - Director of Brand Intelligence, Red Points

Daniel Shapiro brings than 30 years of entrepreneurial leadership in customer service and cutting-edge eCommerce security to Red Points, which provides brand protection, anti-piracy, and seller tracking services. He works to solve complex issues in both major organizations and smaller companies.

No matter what position he has held in any industry, Shapiro has always asked: "What needs to be done to provide the best customer service experience possible?" He works to make technology, exceptional partnerships, and global teams with the right combination of technical skills and a passion for the customer increase the overall value proposition of a business.

Kavita Shukla - CEO, The Freshglow Co.

Kavita Shukla is the Founder & CEO of The Freshglow Co. and the inventor of Freshpaper, a unique innovation that addresses the massive global challenge of food waste. Freshpaper is used by farmers and families across the globe, and The Freshglow Co. has partnered with some of the largest retailers in the world from Whole Foods to Walmart.

Shukla holds four patents and is the youngest woman ever to receive the biennial INDEX Design to Improve Life Award — the world's largest prize for design. Her story of simple beginnings, belief, and empowerment was the subject of a short film by Hollywood director Bryce Dallas Howard.

Shukla's work has been featured by The New York Times, The Washington Post, Bloomberg, Oprah Magazine, Glamour, The Today Show, and CNN. She has been named one of Fast Company's "7 Entrepreneurs Changing the World," Forbes' "30 under 30," and Time Magazine's "5 Most Innovative Women in Food."

Shukla holds a Bachelor of Arts from Harvard University.

Kyle Snowberger, Inventor

Kyle Snowberger developed a passion for aviation and rocketry in the fourth grade. He earned a Bachelor of Science in aerospace engineering from Pennsylvania State University and went on to gain engineering and project management experience at Pratt and Whitney, Beechcraft Defense Company, and Manitowoc Cranes. Now he is pursuing the dream of expanding human spaceflight through commercial habitat delivery. Kyle competed in pitch competitions at his alma mater and at the 34th Space Symposium, and exhibited at the 35th Space Symposium. He is learning what it takes to be a 3rd generation entrepreneur.

Mike Steele - Founder and Owner, Motobriiz LLC

Mike Steele is the founder and owner of Motobriiz LLC, a manufacturer of wind-powered automatic motorcycle chain oilers and other products located in southern Maryland. Motobriiz has sold products in more than 40 countries on six continents and is trademarked in the U.S.

Steel is an engineer with more than 30 years of experience in the defense industry, primarily with the U.S. Navy, and holds several U.S. and international patents. Steele successfully navigated the patent process as a pro se inventor in the U.S., Canada, and Australia and, with minor assistance from a patent attorney, obtained patent protection through the European process in France, Germany, Italy, Spain, and the United Kingdom.

Steele holds a Bachelor of Science degree in mechanical engineering from North Carolina State University.

Steven Thrasher - Thrasher Associates

Steven Thrasher believes (in his humble view) that he provides the best source for easy-to-understand video content about the trademark and patent processes from an applicant's point of view.

ThrashLaw.com combines patent and trademarks services with information of interest to entrepreneurs and startups - like funding and licensing.

Len Tran - Supervisory Patent Examiner, USPTO

Len Tran, a Supervisory Patent Examiner at the USPTO in the mechanical area of Technology Center 3700, currently oversees the examination of applications related to heat exchangers and cryogenics. Tran earned a Bachelor of Engineering degree in chemical engineering from City College of New York (CCNY).

Tran joined the USPTO in 2000 and examined applications related to metallurgy, soldering, and welding for Technology Center 1700. In 2007, Tran became a trainer in the Patent Training Academy, where he trained new patent examiners during an eight-month mandatory training program.

Prior to joining the USPTO, Len was a process engineer at the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) in New York City, where he was responsible for monitoring wastewater treatment throughout the fourteen plant systems of NYC.

Dara Trujillo - Chief Marketing Officer, SLC Holdings

Dara Trujillo has more than 28 years of retail, theme park, and TV shopping experience creating globally-recognized concepts and products. At Disney, she produced products and experiences that park guests enjoy today, including the Bibbidi Bobbidi Boutique, Goofy's Candy Company, the expanded Pin Trading experience, and Duffy the Disney Bear. As HSN's vice president of merchandise business development, she created and managed the American Dreams Program and Entrepreneur Academy, helping entrepreneurs realize their TV retail dreams.

As the chief marketing officer for SLC Group Holdings, Trujillo's top priority is finding amazing entrepreneurs and taking them from startup to stardom.

Aaron Tweedie - CEO, Man-PACK.com

While he was a general contractor, Aaron Tweedie started searching for a bag durable enough for a construction site. It needed to look masculine so the other guys wouldn't make fun of him, and it needed to be useful enough to carry everything. It also needed to be affordable.

After shopping around, Tweedie noticed that there wasn't anything on the market that would suit his needs. So, being a builder, he decided to design and manufacture his own. It needed to be strong enough, light enough, and small enough for adventure. He went through prototype after prototype, refining the product at every step, until the Man-PACK® was born.

Tweedie graduated from Old Dominion University in 2006 with a Bachelor of Science in business administration, his major was marketing. He made his way through college as an entrepreneur, building and selling houses as he went. Tweedie has been a millworker, waiter, infantryman, insurance salesman, car salesman, realtor, and building contractor, and he believes his most important job is being committed father.

Raymond Van Dyke - D.C. Chapter Chair of the Licensing Executives Society and Founder of Van Dyke Law

Ray Van Dyke's practice focuses on technology law in a variety of industries and sciences. He specializes in patent, licensing, trademark, trade secret, and copyright issues, with a particular emphasis on U.S. and foreign patent and trademark consulting, preparation, prosecution, portfolio management, and patentability, validity, enforceability, and infringement opinions, including defending and bringing third party oppositions and other post-grant procedures. Van Dyke also teaches intellectual property and testifies on IP laws and regulations.

Sean Wilkerson - Innovation Development Program Manager, USPTO

Sean Wilkerson works in the Office of the Chief Communications Officer at the USPTO, creating IP awareness programs and managing outreach services to independent inventors, small businesses, entrepreneurs, makers, and universities. Wilkerson previously worked as an outreach coordinator for the programs leading up to the opening of the USPTO's Texas Regional Office. He also spent a year as part of the New York engagement team that developed the 2015 Future of Urban Innovation Startups Summit in coordination with Columbia University and the USPTO. From 2011 - 2013, he served as the program manager the inaugural Select USA Summit, developing the program, structure and outreach efforts of a U.S. government-wide program housed in the International Trade Administration of the United States Department of Commerce.

Krista Woods - CEO of GloveStix

Krista Woods was in the sales, training and management industry for 27 years. Although being female in a male-dominated field wasn't always easy, she found repeated success in her ability to effectively communicate with her coworkers and customers. She was promoted quickly and invested in her leadership skills along the way. In 2016, she added award-winning inventor to her resume as the CEO of GloveStix.

As a mother of three athletic children, she had dealt with "the stink" for many years, but it wasn't until her youngest child became an avid lacrosse player that it became serious. "I remember I was spraying down my sons gloves, AGAIN, with another brand of some chemical spray, and I just couldn't stop thinking... this isn't right, this can't be healthy for him!"

She decided to invent something both effective and healthy herself. "I wanted something that was safe, I didn't want these chemicals touching the kids' hands." So, on a long ride back from another hot and stinky lacrosse tournament, GloveStix was born.

As soon as she got home, Woods and her husband, Chris, went to work on prototypes and testing. On Shark Tank, she pitched her product to some of America's toughest investors and closed a deal with not one, but two of the Sharks.

Woods and her company have been honored with more than 15 awards over the last three years, including The Today Show's Next Big Thing and an International Stevie Award for Female Entrepreneur of the Year. She believes that her greatest accomplishments come as a result of her ability to forge relationships with all types of personalities.

Elaine Wu - Senior Counsel for China, Office of Policy and International Affairs, USPTO

Elaine T.L. Wu is the senior counsel for China in the Office of Policy and International Affairs at the USPTO. In that capacity, she is responsible for leading the "China Team", a dedicated group of attorneys with expertise on China's intellectual property system. The China Team works with other branches of the U.S. government to develop IP policy focused on improving China's IP environment for the benefit of U.S. companies doing business there. The China Team also conducts extensive outreach to U.S. companies to educate them on how to protect/enforce their IP in China.

Prior to coming to the USPTO, Wu worked as a patent litigation associate at Howrey, Simon, Arnold and White in Washington, D.C. She has also worked at the International Trade Commission's Office of Unfair Import Investigation, where she handled legal issues relating to Section 337 of the Tariff Act of 1930, as amended, and at the Office of the U.S. Trade Representative's Office of China Affairs.

Wu received her law degree from the Washington College of Law at the American University in Washington D.C. She holds a Bachelor of Science degree with honors from the University of Florida. She is licensed to practice law in the District of Columbia.

Ruth Young-Loaeza - Entrepreneur and Inventor of the Hybrid Bedsheet Collection

Ruth Young-Loaeza is small business owner and entrepreneur. After recuperating from a car accident that left her unable to work, and left her and husband homeless, she started creating drawings and prototypes of the many product ideas she had come up with while working in the cleaning industry.

Her journey started when she attended Invention-Con 2017, where she met one of the speakers. She received an invitation to an invention competition in New York City, where she was awarded first place for her innovative bed sheets. Only two weeks after this milestone, she received an investment of \$25,000 from enthusiasts who believed that her invention was unique and had great potential.

Since then, her Hybrid Bedsheet Collection has been featured in the media, and Young-Loaeza has been awarded several scholarships. She has been accepted by two accelerators programs in the San Diego area and an innovation program at the University of San Diego. She won second place at the San Diego Inventors Forum annual competition; after winning, she was invited to join the forum committee. She was recently invited to be the face of one of San Diego's innovation programs in conjunction with the BRINK program at the University of San Diego.

Young-Loaeza has made use of both the pro bono services available through the USPTO's Law School Clinic Certification Programs and the resources of the Pro Se Assistance Program. She is currently featured in the USPTO's Inventors Eye magazine.

Key USPTO Resources for Inventors, Startups, & Entrepreneurs

PATENT RESOURCES

Basic information about patents & the patenting process

Patents Home Page	www.uspto.gov/patents
Inventors Assistance Program Resources	www.uspto.gov/inventors
Inventors Assistance (Call) Center	www.uspto.gov/inventors/iac
IP Awareness Tool	www.uspto.gov/inventors/assessment
Patent Process Flow Chart to USPTO guides	www.uspto.gov/patents/process/index.jsp
Pro Bono Program — General Description	www.uspto.gov/inventors/proseprobono

Details of the patenting process

EFS-Web — filing patent applications via the web	www.uspto.gov/patents-application-process/applying-online/about-efs-web
Track One Prioritized Examination Information and FAQ	www.uspto.gov/patents/init_events/Track_One.jsp
Micro-Entity Status Information (Search “Micro” in FAQs)	www.uspto.gov/patent/laws-and-regulations/america-invents-act-aia/america-invents-act-aia-frequently-asked

Patent search and examination guidance

Patent Search Tutorial	www.uspto.gov/patents/process/search/index.jsp
Patent Examination Guidance	www.uspto.gov/patents/law/exam/examguide.jsp

TRADEMARK RESOURCES

Trademarks Home Page	www.uspto.gov/trademark
Trademark Basics for New Filers	www.uspto.gov/trademarks/basics
Trademark Information Network (TMIN) Videos	www.uspto.gov/Watch/TMIN
Basic Facts Booklet	www.uspto.gov/sites/default/files/documents/BasicFacts.pdf
Trademark Videos	www.uspto.gov/trademark/trademark-videos

NEWS, UPDATES, AND UPCOMING EVENTS

USPTO News/Updates Subscription Center	www.uspto.gov/subscribe
Inventors Eye e-Magazine	www.uspto.gov/InventorsEye
Upcoming Events: conferences, etc. for inventors and entrepreneurs	www.uspto.gov/about-us/events

Resource Highlight: Patents Pro Se Assistance Program

Understanding the Patenting Process

The USPTO recommends using a registered attorney or agent to assist in preparing and prosecuting a patent application to conform to U.S. laws and guidelines. But if you are not using a registered attorney or agent (also known as pro se filing), the Patents Pro Se Assistance Program can help.

How Can the Pro Se Assistance Program Help?

All pro se applicants, from those just starting out to those that may have questions about a notice they received or want to confirm the forms they are sending, can benefit from the Pro Se Assistance Program. In some cases, inventors have not yet filed for a patent and are looking for guidance on filing an application.

The Pro Se Assistance Program has two components: (a) an internal examination unit dedicated specifically to examining patent applications pro se and (b) an assistance program for the public.

The internal examination unit, the Pro Se Art Unit, is a unit that solely examines applications identified as “pro se.” Examiners in this unit have a wealth of experience and enthusiasm for examining pro se applications and are encouraged to communicate frequently and closely with applicants to solve any issues that arise during the course of prosecution. These examiners also help staff our public assistance program.

The assistance program for the public offers various services via a staff of dedicated personnel who are trained for assisting pro se applicants before they file a patent and through the entire patenting process. In addition to our personnel, extensive online resources to connect applicants with relevant resources, information, and checklists are available and routinely updated.

Visit <https://www.uspto.gov/prosepatents> for resources such as:

- A video on the “Roadmap to Filing a Patent Application”
- Application checklist
- Understanding EFS-Web

In-person assistance for the general public via the Pro Se Assistance Program is also available by appointment at USPTO headquarters, in Alexandria, Virginia. To make an appointment, please call toll free: 1-866-767-3848 or email innovationdevelopment@uspto.gov. We also have a pilot program to provide live, virtual assistance from Patent and Trademark Resources Centers (PTRCs) in Fort Lauderdale, Florida; Amherst, Massachusetts; Morgantown, West Virginia; Houghton, Michigan; Reno, Nevada; Highland Heights, Kentucky; Rochester, New York; and Fairbanks, Alaska.



A special thanks to the Invention-Con 2019 planning team members

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Benjamin Carpenter

Julianne Metzger

Philippa Olsen

Robert Berry

Katrina S. Copeland

Tomeka Oubichon

David Jones

Zandra Smith

Elizabeth Dougherty

Leveraging your Intellectual Property in the Marketplace



UPCOMING EVENTS

Details on all the below events are available at www.uspto.gov/events

Patent Alerts - Keep informed about USPTO policy changes, alerts, notices, and events by signing up for Patent Alert at www.uspto.gov/subscribe.

Inventors Eye - Inventors Eye is our publication for the independent inventor community. Visit our subscription center at www.uspto.gov/subscribe to subscribe to Inventors Eye and start receiving the latest stories, advice, and tips for inventors, entrepreneurs, and small business owners in your inbox.

Women's Entrepreneurship Symposium - The symposium will offer networking opportunities with experts in the intellectual property field, as well as government and industry representatives who will help attendees gain insight into all facets of the patent process (March 2020).

Monthly Review - Reflect on the latest happenings at the USPTO. Get connected and catch up on social media posts, blogs, events, and monthly 'Journeys of Innovation' about successful inventors and entrepreneurs of the past and present. Visit our subscription center at www.uspto.gov/subscribe and subscribe to "USPTO Monthly Review."

Invention-Con 2020 - Date and location of Invention-Con 2020 to be determined.



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