

It Takes **Skill** to Recognize **Ingenuity**

## Introducing USPTO Patent Examiner Rebecca V.

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### What is your educational background?

I graduated from George Mason University in Fairfax, VA, with a Bachelor of Science in Electrical Engineering in 2012.

### What made you accept a position at the USPTO?

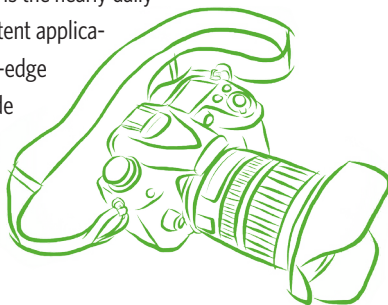
After graduation, I was seeking a Washington, D.C., area engineering position. My father, who happens to be a patent attorney, suggested that the USPTO might be a good fit. So I did some investigating and was impressed by the competitive salary, benefit structures and flexible work schedules being offered. As a result, I made the decision to apply for the position of patent examiner.

### What is your job at the USPTO?

I joined the USPTO as a patent examiner in 2013. My job is to review and analyze patent applications to determine if they are eligible to be issued as U.S. patents. Like most examiners, I concentrate on specific technology areas. For me, those include video compression and various camera technologies.

### Why do you like working at the USPTO?

I find the ability to set my own schedule is a great benefit. That flexibility has allowed me to adopt a work schedule that balances well with my personal life. Also, the teleworking program provides for even more flexibility in choosing work hours. Another great benefit is the nearly daily exposure to new technologies. Patent applications are often directed to cutting-edge products and methods, and provide a constant source of learning, which I really enjoy.



### How would you describe a typical work day?

My day typically begins with a look at the status of the patent applications on my docket calendar. The docket will determine whether my day is primarily devoted to handling a new patent application, or preparing a written reply to a response previously filed by a patent applicant. Other common activities include telephone conferences with patent attorneys representing patent applicants, and attending training sessions regarding new or updated operating guidelines.

### What is the most interesting case you've worked on?

I reviewed an application for an invention that detected fraud in self-checkout scanners. I found this interesting because its real-world application was so easy to visualize. In addition, I was quite impressed with solutions offered by the invention itself.

### Why do you think being a patent examiner is a great first job out of college?

For one, the salary schedule coupled with benefits is certainly competitive. Also, it is difficult to imagine another comparable position elsewhere which offers such a high degree of work schedule flexibility. Further, the constant exposure to new and cutting-edge technologies always keeps things interesting.

### What advice would you give someone interested in becoming a patent examiner?

Self-discipline and a willingness to learn are two vital skills to have as a patent examiner. Examiners operate independently to get the job done. In addition, technologies are constantly evolving, so it is necessary to spend time learning what is new in a given field.

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