

## **MARIA T. HOLTMANN**

Ms. Holtmann is the Associate Commissioner for International Patent Cooperation leading numerous, cross-cutting initiatives including patent classification and work sharing programs, and the creation of information technology solutions for international filers and examiners. She is a key liaison among the international stakeholder and IP office communities, developing and promoting programs that drive global innovation.

Prior to joining the USPTO in 2008, she led technical projects for the Office of Science and Technology Policy at the White House.

Ms. Holtmann received a Master of Science in Human-Computer Interaction from Stevens Institute of Technology and a Bachelor of Science from the State University of New York at Cortland. She began her career at AT&T as a human factors and usability engineer and spent over 10 years in the telecommunications industry focusing on the design of internal business applications and consumer products.

Ms. Holtmann has over 20 years of experience in IT, telecommunications, and management consulting industries leading large-scale projects. She has held executive leadership positions at Ernst & Young and the American Institutes for Research. While at Ernst & Young and AT&T, she supported several multi-million dollar international merger and acquisition teams in both senior management and technical roles.

## **DONALD HAJEC**

Donald Hajec is currently an Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Patent Operations at the USPTO and has oversight for Technology Center 2800 and the Office of Patent Examining Support Services (OPESS). Don's career at the USPTO spans 34 years, and includes roles as a Primary Patent Examiner, Supervisory Patent Examiner, and Quality Assurance Specialist. In 2002, Don was appointed to the Senior Executive Service as a Technology Center Director where he served in Technology Centers 3600 and 3700.

Don is the recipient of numerous awards, including receiving the Department of Commerce Gold (Cooperative Patent Classification (CPC) Implementation) and Silver (Patent Assistance Center) Medals and twice received Bronze Medals. Some of Don's recent special projects include the CPC Joint Board, the Enhanced Patent Quality Initiative (EPQI) Clarity of Record—Improving Clarity and Reasoning in Office Actions Training, and the Joint Labor Management Team.

## **ROBIN EVANS**

Robin Evans joined the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) as a patent examiner after receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Mechanical Engineering from the University of Maryland. She began her career as a patent examiner examining applications in the sprinkler and dispersants technologies. Robin became a Supervisory Patent Examiner in January 2005 and has supervised the examination of applications in the electrical heating technology and the fluid handling technologies. She became a Management Training Quality Assurance Specialist in 2007 in the mechanical and electrical technologies. Through years of service she has developed a solid understanding of Intellectual Property and as a result was awarded the Department of Commerce Bronze Medal and Exceptional Career Award for exceptional performance and service.

Robin was named the first Regional Manager of the Elijah J. McCoy Regional Office in Detroit. In this role, she was responsible for handling the daily operations of the first-ever regional office in the over-200 year history of the USPTO. She opened the office in July 2012, and in her first year successfully transformed the office into a highly functional site, staffed with patent examiners and administrative judges. Ms. Evans served as the Interim Director of the Rocky Mountain Regional Office located in Denver, CO. Robin is a Director in Technology Center 2800, where she and her co-Directors are responsible for leading over 90 managers and over 1600 examiners in the field of Semiconductors, Electrical and Optical systems and components.

## **JACK HARVEY**

Jack Harvey is the Director of Technology Center 3700 at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO); this Technology Center examines applications in the area of mechanical engineering, manufacturing and products. Additionally, Mr. Harvey is acting as an Assistant Deputy Commissioner for Patent Operations overseeing the areas of communications, transportation, construction, agriculture, e-commerce and national security.

Mr. Harvey joined the USPTO as a patent examiner after receiving a Bachelor of Science degree in Electrical Engineering from Clarkson University. He examined applications in the electrical area and served as a Supervisory Patent Examiner in computer architecture and well as a Quality Assurance Specialist in related fields. Mr. Harvey was appointed to the Senior Executive Service, and over the past 10 years he has served in the capacity of Director in four Technology Centers including the Database and Semiconductor technologies.

## **BRIAN E. HANLON**

Brian E. Hanlon is the Director of the Office of Patent Legal Administration (OPLA) at the United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO). Prior to taking his current position, Mr. Hanlon served as the acting Chief of Staff for Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the USPTO, David J. Kappos, and served as the Director of Strategic Planning and Management Council for Under Secretary and Director Jon W. Dudas and acting Under Secretary and Director John J. Doll. Prior to his work in the Under Secretary's Office, Mr. Hanlon was the Deputy Director of OPLA. Mr. Hanlon was also a shareholder at the law firm of Banner & Witcoff, Ltd. where his practice focused on patent prosecution and client counseling on issues relating to both procurement and enforcement of utility and design patents.

Mr. Hanlon began his career as a patent examiner at the USPTO in former Group 3300, now TC 3700. He received a Bachelor of Science in Mechanical Engineering with Honors from Worcester Polytechnic Institute, and a J.D., *Magna Cum Laude*, from the Catholic University of America, Columbus School of Law. Mr. Hanlon is a member of the Bars of Maryland, the District of Columbia, and the United States Supreme Court.

## **MARTIN RATER**

Mr. Rater is the Chief Statistician in the Office of Patent Quality Assurance (OPQA). He joined the USPTO in 2000 as part of the Office of Quality Management and Training where he led efforts related to customer and employee surveys and provided statistical consultation for both the Patents and Trademarks quality review programs. In 2004, Mr. Rater transferred to OPQA and today oversees several aspects of the quality review program such as sample design, review methodology, and reporting of quality metrics. Mr. Rater also oversees OPQA's ISO 9001-certified quality management system and serves on several teams tasked with evaluating program effectiveness, primarily focusing on impacts to quality and production.

Prior to joining the USPTO, Mr. Rater worked as a consultant designing program evaluations and providing data analysis and survey expertise to Federal agencies and Fortune 500 companies. Upon graduation from the University of Georgia in 1990, Mr. Rater began his career working for USDA, conducting surveys and data analyses related to the estimation of crop and livestock production.

## **CASSANDRA SPYROU**

Cassandra (Sandie) Spyrou holds a B.S. degree in Electrical Engineering from Widener University. Sandie joined the USPTO in 1989 and examined patent applications in both the technological arts of cameras and musical instruments becoming a primary examiner in 1995. While a Primary Examiner, she received a Department of Commerce Bronze Medal for her contributions to the development of an innovative training program for new hires and the 1997 Office of Civil Rights Director's award for her support of the equal employment opportunity program. Sandie was selected as a Supervisory Patent Examiner in the technology of Optical Elements in 1998 and stepped into a newly developed position as the first Training Quality Assurance Specialist for Technology Center 2800 in 2002. In 2008, she took on the leadership role for the quality program in TC 2800 first as a Workgroup Coordinator and then in 2011 as the Quality Subject Matter Expert.

Sandie has served as acting Group Director both 2008 and 2013 and earned for her individual performance the Department of Commerce Bronze medal in 2009, the USPTO Exceptional Career award in 2010 and the Distinguished Career award in 2013. Her roles in training and quality assurance prepared her to accept a detail in 2013 that focused on AIA First Inventor-to-File implementation and training for both examiners and the public. Sandie recently received a Department of Commerce Gold Medal award for her work on the AIA First Inventor-to-File implementation. In 2015, she accepted a detail as Senior Advisor to Deputy Commissioner for Patent Quality Valencia Martin Wallace where she focuses on the development and implementation of the USPTO's Enhanced Patent Quality Initiative. Most recently, Sandie has stepped into the role as Supervisory Review Assurance Specialist functioning as the Quality Lead for TC 2800.

## **KATHLEEN KERR BRAGDON**

Kathleen Kerr Bragdon holds a B.A. degree from Connecticut College and a Ph.D. degree from Brandeis University, both in biochemistry. Following a postdoctoral position in the Laboratory of Cell Biology at the National Cancer Institute, NIH, Kathleen joined the USPTO, specifically in Technology Center 1600 for Biotechnology & Organic Chemistry, in 1999 and examined patent applications in classes 435 and 514 concerning recombinant enzymes and their applications. Kathleen was recognized as examining Master's level art in 2003, became a primary examiner in 2004, and received the Department of Commerce Bronze Medal Award in 2005. Further in 2005, she became the supervisory patent examiner of Art Unit 1656 examining enzymology and protein crystallography patent applications. In 2008, Kathleen accepted a position as a Quality Assurance Specialist for Technology Center 1600.

Her roles in training and quality assurance prepared her to accept a detail in 2013 that focused on AIA First Inventor to File implementation and training for both examiners and the public. Kathleen recently received a Department of Commerce Gold Medal award for her work on the AIA First Inventor to File implementation. Kathleen accepted a new position as Senior Advisor to Deputy Commissioner for Patent Quality Valencia Martin Wallace where she focuses on the development and implementation of the USPTO's Enhanced Patent Quality Initiative.

## **RUSSELL SLIFER**

Russ Slifer is the Deputy Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Deputy Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office. He provides strategic leadership and oversight to one of the largest intellectual property offices in the world.

Most recently, Mr. Slifer served as the Director of the Rocky Mountain Regional United States Patent and Trademark Office, where he led efforts to foster business and technological innovation. His team promoted economic development and intellectual property knowledge throughout the Rocky Mountain region. He encouraged increased cooperation between USPTO stakeholders, the patent and trademark applicants, the intellectual property bar, businesses, and the education community in the region. In addition, Mr. Slifer advised the USPTO on a variety of policy matters.

Before joining the USPTO, Mr. Slifer served as Chief Patent Counsel for Micron Technology in Boise, Idaho where he developed an effective worldwide patent portfolio strategy. He was also a Principal at Schwegman Lundberg & Woessner in Minneapolis, advising a wide range of high-technology clients from start-ups to Fortune 100 companies on intellectual property matters.

Mr. Slifer has also held a number of leadership positions, including President of the Association of Corporate Patent Counsel and Board Member of the Intellectual Property Owners Association. Prior to his legal career, Mr. Slifer was a design engineer for Honeywell.