

26 January 2012

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Mr. David Kappos
Under Secretary for Intellectual Property
Director for the United States Patent and Trademark Office
Department of Commerce
445 12th Street, SW
Washington, DC 20554

Dear Under Secretary Kappos:

On behalf of the faculty and staff of the Pratt School of Engineering, I am writing in support of the State of North Carolina's request for USPTO to consider our state for the location of a satellite office. As you know Duke Pratt School of Engineering is a leader in areas such as biophotonics, ultrasound imaging, compressive imaging, aerodynamics and aeroelasticity, microfluidics, computer architecture and performance integrity, applied signal processing, micro and nano device design and fabrication, applied metamaterials, nonlinear and computational mechanics, and environmental science and bioremediation. Pratt received a #4 national ranking in Biomedical/Bioengineering by US News & World Report in 2010 with over \$90 million in annual research expenditures school-wide.

In addition to our efforts in biomedical, civil and environmental, electrical and computer engineering and mechanical engineering and materials science efforts, we are also currently launching a research and education initiative focused on energy. The engineering initiative will support a broader university effort that will engage six schools at Duke: the Nicholas School for the Environment, Law, Fuqua School of Business, Trinity Arts & Sciences and the Sanford School of Public Policy.

Through a six year, \$13.6M grant, the National Science Foundation (NSF) Division of Materials Research has established a multi-university center in the Research Triangle area of North Carolina to investigate aspects and applications of programmable assembly of soft matter. The Triangle MRSEC (<http://www.mrsec.duke.edu>) will include researchers at Duke University, North Carolina State University, University of North Carolina-Chapel Hill and North Carolina Central University and will include two primary interdisciplinary research groups. One group is focused on multicomponent colloidal assembly and fundamental understanding of self-assembly of bulk functional materials from multi-component colloidal suspensions, and one investigating the concept of syntax in the sequence of genetically encoded peptides with a deliberate goal of understanding programmable self-assembly of these peptides into supramolecular nano- to meso-

scale structures. These are just a few examples of areas from which we expect Duke Engineering to be an engine of new intellectual property.

In the 5 year period from 2006 to 2011, Duke has seen a rapid increase in both the number of inventions disclosed (from 165 per year to 234 per year) and the number patent applications filed (from 157 per year to 252 per year). As these numbers steadily increase, having access to a regional patent office would be a great asset to Duke Pratt School of Engineering and to the region.

The Research Triangle, home to large conglomerates including GlaxoSmithKline, IBM, Bayer, and Research Triangle Institute generates significant intellectual property development and is poised to grow dramatically, owing to one of the strongest small business environments outside the Silicon Valley and Boston. Demographically, with the only satellite office located in Detroit, the Southeast and particularly the Research Triangle area with its overabundance of innovative ideas facilitating conversion into patents, businesses and jobs, is obviously grossly under-represented. Duke University and the Pratt School of Engineering are committed to the goals of the USPTO and would welcome and benefit from the regional access that a satellite office would provide.

For these reasons, we urge you to consider North Carolina as the location of a USPTO satellite office.

Sincerely,



Tom Katsouleas
Professor and Dean

Cc: Barry Myers, MD, PhD, MBA, Duke Prof of Biomedical Engineering
Rose Ritts, PhD, Dir, Duke Office of Science and Technology
Christopher Simmons, Assoc VP, Duke Office of Federal Relations
John Hardin, PhD, Executive Dir, Office of Science & Technology, NC Dept of Commerce
Bradford Sneeden, Policy Advisor, Office of the NC Governor