



NORTH CAROLINA AGRICULTURAL AND TECHNICAL STATE UNIVERSITY

DIVISION OF RESEARCH

January 27, 2012

Azam Khan
Deputy Chief of Staff
United States Patent and Trademark Office
Mail Stop: Office of Under Secretary and Director
PO Box 1450
Alexandria, VA 22313-1450

VIA E-MAIL
satelliteoffices@uspto.gov

Dear Mr. Khan,

I am writing to urge Director Kappos and the USPTO to consider North Carolina as the next home for a satellite Patent and Trademark Office. North Carolina meets or exceeds many of the criteria used to evaluate potential satellite locations and would best serve the interests of the USPTO's employees, the USPTO's user community, and America's patent and trademark system, while ensuring geographic diversity among USPTO offices.

I understand that through its satellite offices, the USPTO endeavors to increase outreach activities, enhance quality of life indicators, improve retention, and improve the quality of patent examination, among other goals.

North Carolina offers a quality of life that encourages and enables businesses to attract and keep skilled workers. According to the USPTO's database of attorneys and agents, North Carolina is already home to over 800 registered attorneys and agents. According to Deputy Undersecretary of Commerce Margaret Peterlin's 2007 comments, North Carolina is additionally home to a number of USPTO teleworking employees. I'm confident that Deputy Commissioner for Trademark Operations, Mary Boney Denison, who is a graduate of both Duke University and the University of North Carolina School of Law, can also attest to the benefits of living in North Carolina.

Indeed, the USPTO (www.uspto.gov/about/ipm/the_research_triangle.jsp) has recognized the unique strengths of one area in North Carolina:

North Carolina's Research Triangle – situated between Raleigh, Durham, and Chapel Hill – is one of the most prominent research and development centers in the United States anchored by a mixture of high-tech start-ups; global Fortune 100 companies such as IBM, Cisco, Cree, and Sony Ericsson; and cutting-edge research institutions including Duke University, University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill, and North Carolina State University. This thriving hub of innovation is home to more than a dozen pioneering industries including biotechnology, pharmaceuticals, clean technology, and information technology.

By combining the strengths and synergies between the state's academic, government, and industry base, North Carolina's Research Triangle has provided the infrastructure and highly-educated work force necessary to attract ground-breaking research and development operations from across the globe.

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Research strength in North Carolina extends beyond Research Triangle Park. For example, the Piedmont Triad is home to Wake Forest University, University of North Carolina at Greensboro (UNC-G) and North Carolina Agricultural and Technical State University. NC A&T is an HBCU with a long history of strong STEM education and research efforts. The USPTO likely recognized this history, when in 2005 the Patent Corps Recruitment Hiring Action Plan targeted NC A&T along with 9 universities, including North Carolina State University. NC A&T educates more African-American engineers than any other university in the nation. It is home to a National Science Foundation's "third generation" Engineering Research Center, which has dual objectives of global scientific leadership and economic impact. NC A&T collaborated with UNC-G in the creation of the Joint School of Nanoscience & Nanoengineering (JSNN), whose mission is to train students to conduct basic and applied research, offering both masters and doctoral degrees. The strong STEM research programs throughout the state provide a pool of prospective Examiners from which the PTO can draw.

By choosing North Carolina for a satellite office, the USPTO will be located in the midst of a vibrant, well-educated STEM workforce with a good quality of life. The concentration of academic and corporate research efforts in North Carolina provides proximity to both clients and potential employees of the USPTO.

For these reasons, I strongly urge you to consider locating a USPTO satellite office in North Carolina. Thank you for your attention to this request.

Sincerely,



Wayne Szafranski
Assistant Vice Chancellor of Outreach and Economic Development
North Carolina A&T State University