

PTRCA President's Report, 2019-2020

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When I was originally asked to run for VP/President of PTRCA, I asked about the time commitment. Past presidents told me what was involved and that the time required was minimal. When you take on this type of leadership role, you hope that things will run smoothly. I was grateful to be elected to this position and looked forward to the year ahead. Then I heard about the USPTO pulling the Fellowship program, leaving numerous vacancies in the PTRCP Office, and the strong possibility of Seminar 2020 being cancelled. A fun time to serve as President, let's do this! We as a membership really came together this year and worked hard to support the program that helps us, and for that, I am proud of the year we have had.

The most time-consuming yet impactful activity this year was the letter-writing campaign on behalf of the PTRC Program. Due to the above-mentioned concerns, the Executive Council drafted a letter on behalf of PTRCA to the Under Secretary of Commerce for Intellectual Property and Director of the United States Patent and Trademark Office, Andrei Iancu, Deputy Under Secretary Laura Peter, and CIO for the USPTO Henry J. Holcombe, expressing the importance of the PTRC Program and the need to fill their vacant positions, keep the Fellowship, and press on with our annual seminar. I asked our members to reach out to their constituents, and we received letters from attorneys, PTRC reps, inventors, faculty, library directors and department heads, government officials (including a Congressman), SBA, and SBDC. Although I did not hear back from anyone at the USPTO, the PTRC Program Office was given the green light to hire two new librarians, so I would like to think that our actions made a difference.

Since the PTRC Program Office was unable to host the annual seminar this year, some members expressed an interest in attending the PIUG (Patent Information Users Group) Annual Conference. Having no seminar reception or snacks/drinks to pay for, the Executive Council approved the use of PTRCA funds to put toward \$600 PIUG Travel Grants. I look forward to hearing more in the future about what our members have learned at this conference.

Back during the 2014-2015 business year, Ran Raider, past PTRCA President, drafted a proposal to honor Esther Crawford with a Distinguished Service Award in her name given to a deserving PTRCA member for demonstrating outstanding service to the PTRCA. I am proud to say that this year, we will be presenting the inaugural Esther Crawford Award at the Annual Business Meeting.

It has been a pleasure to be able to communicate more this year with representatives from around the country as well as staff in the PTRC Program Office. As President, I have served as Ex Officio on several PTRCA committees this year and have enjoyed learning more about the association. Having served as an Associate Editor, I feel really good about the direction of the *Journal of the Patent & Trademark Resource Center Association*, which transitioned from newsletter to journal six years ago and along the way it has become more of an open-access academic journal, publishing peer-reviewed journal articles. Last year, the journal began hosting content on Clemson University's TigerPrints platform, which allows for assigning of DOIs and indexing within Google Scholar. Kudos to Dave Zwicky, Suzanne Reinman, Jan Comfort, and Dave Irvin for their efforts in pushing our journal to new heights.

I would also like to acknowledge Marian Armour-Gemmen and West Virginia University for taking over the hosting and maintenance of our PTRCA listserv after Jan Comfort's retirement. This change occurred

the week of last year's seminar, and as we come up on the one-year anniversary, I know the rest of PTRCA joins me in thanking Marian for a seamless transition.

I want to express my appreciation to the PTRC Program Office for supporting 83 PTRCs while being very understaffed. Last year, they managed to put on a seminar with the assistance of volunteers from PTRC Program's past. Annual seminar is something we all look forward to every year and we (and our patrons) benefit from this professional development and networking experience. We will miss this valuable experience this year and look forward to going back to Alexandria again next year.

Thanks so much to Rob Berry for running the Program and to Neil Massong for all the day-to-day support. I want to send special thanks to Spruce Fraser who has offered guidance since I began considering running for President. In addition to working at USPTO, Spruce is a Past President of PTRCA, and I appreciate her constant willingness to help the association.

Many thanks go to the Executive Council for their assistance in a not-so-easy year. To Dave Zwicky (Past President, West Lafayette) for his guidance as he passed the gavel, Missy Murphey (Vice President, Orlando), Sara Butts (Secretary, Wichita), Jim Miller (Treasurer, College Park), Suzanne Reinman (Stillwater), Siu Min Yu (Houston), Jim Bettinger (Cleveland), Christine Deines (Davenport), and Sharyl Overhiser (Philadelphia) (who agreed to complete Christine's 2nd year). Special thanks to Dave and Siu who are both rolling off the Council.

Much appreciation also goes to everyone who chaired and served on committees. You are what keeps our association moving forward. That said, I encourage everyone to consider serving on one of our committees. You can do so by filling out the online form at <https://tinyurl.com/v7o8d5m>.

It has been an honor and privilege to serve as President of PTRCA; thanks to everyone for their hard work this past year.