

INNOVATION DEPENDS ON INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY PROTECTIONS

At America's research universities, a long history of women-led technology transfer fuels the creation of world-changing innovations. The Bayh-Dole Coalition salutes some of our members who made that possible.

Karin Immergluck



As associate vice provost of Stanford University's Office of Technology Licensing, Karin oversaw the licensing of over 450 new technologies in 2022, including a landmark, FDA-cleared medical device, the SAINT™ Neuromodulation System to treat major depressive disorder.

"Our main mission is to get the fruits of our research into the hands of companies and people who can turn it into products and services that will benefit society."



Lisa Kuuttila



For 20 years, Lisa has served as president and CEO of the University of New Mexico's Rainforest Innovations, which supported the launch of over 90 startups between 2013 and 2022.

"Our organization is unique because we work across so many different parts of the university and business community. We also work to bring those people together in order to create opportunities from those partnerships."



Kelly Sexton



Currently associate VP of innovation partnerships at the University of Michigan, Kelly previously headed the technology licensing program at North Carolina State University. Under her leadership in 2022, U-M disclosed 433 inventions, recorded 278 licensing agreements, and launched 16 startups.

"America's innovative, economic edge has long been bolstered by a strong policy framework that encourages public-private partnerships."



Robin Rasor



Robin previously directed technology licensing efforts at the University of Michigan and The Ohio State University before becoming associate VP for translation & commercialization at Duke. Her office at Duke has helped bring the eyelash growth serum Latisse and the gout treatment Krystexxa to market.

"Over my many years at three universities, I've seen countless, life-changing discoveries come out of university research labs, the majority of them resulting from federal funding. But these research discoveries would have never made it off of college campuses if it weren't for bipartisan legislation passed 40 years ago — the Bayh-Dole Act."



Teri Willey



Teri recently retired as managing director of IU Ventures, where she developed several investment funds to support companies with Indiana University affiliations. Teri was previously the first full-time technology transfer officer hired at Northwestern University, where she contributed to the licensing of the nerve pain medication Lyrica, and Purdue University, where she licensed tissue engineering technology that's used in countless surgeries.

"[Patents] create an incentive to invest in ideas."



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Jennifer Gottwald



Jennifer has served as a director of licensing at the Wisconsin Alumni Research Foundation for 20 years, with a focus on life-science research tools and biotechnology. One of her most notable projects involved the licensing of a DNA extraction reagent for genetic testing in newborns. She's also a founder and active member of AUTM's Women Inventors group.

"Everybody working at a university is really driven to discover to add to what we as humans know about the world and how it works and how we can make it better."



Kathy Ku



Kathy joined Stanford University's Office of Technology Licensing in 1981 — and served as its executive director from 1991 until 2018. Kathy's work ensured that hundreds of inventions from Stanford's labs — including PageRank, the algorithm that drives Google web searches — made it to the marketplace.

"Technology transfer offices ... have only one product to sell: technology. The value attributed to such technology is impacted heavily by the quality and scope of the intellectual property protection."



Lesley Millar-Nicholson



As the executive director of the Massachusetts Institute of Technology's Technology Licensing Office, Lesley and her team manage approximately 700 inventions annually, including those in the aerospace, green energy, and artificial intelligence sectors.

"Recognize that there are fewer female-backed startup companies, fewer women on Boards of companies, fewer patent-holding female scientists – but don't let that be a hurdle. In fact, find those who have or are those things – and learn from them, what inspires them, what tricks and tools have they created to achieve what they have achieved."



Carol Mimura



Carol established UC Berkeley's Office of IP and Industry Research Alliances in 2004, which has supported the creation of more than 730 products and 250 startup companies. At Berkeley, Carol has overseen the licensing of countless technologies, including the Nobel-Prize-winning immunotherapy Yervoy and robotic exoskeletons to improve mobility for paralyzed and injured individuals.

"Cutting IP protections would ... prevent the commercialization of ground-breaking discoveries arising in universities — including those that could spawn entirely new industries."



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Theresa Mayer



Before becoming Carnegie Mellon's vice president for research in 2023, Theresa worked within the technology licensing offices of Purdue University, Virginia Tech, and Penn State University. Her office works closely with CMU's Center for Technology Transfer and Enterprise Creation (CTTEC), which has helped foster over 100 spinout companies and over 600 successful patent applications in the last decade.

"...The long-standing, strong support of government and partnership with industry are keys to sustaining a national innovation base that leads the world."

Carnegie
Mellon
University

Nichole Mercier



Under Nichole's leadership as assistant vice chancellor and managing director of the Office of Technology Management, invention disclosures, licensing transactions, and startups formed at WashU have doubled or more. Dr. Mercier also established Women in Innovation and Technology at WashU and Equalize nationally to enable academic women and minority researchers to overcome barriers to entrepreneurship.

"Many researchers have a vision of how their work could benefit society and my work in tech transfer enables us to vet these ideas and give them a shot at making a difference."

 Washington
University in St. Louis

Felicia Metz



Felicia advises potential startups and inventors on IP portfolio development and licensing as the associate director for UM Ventures at the University of Maryland. Felicia's team manages invention disclosures, files patents for, and helps launch startups like Airgility, which specializes in autonomous vehicles, and Grip Boost, which manufactures grip-enhancing gel for use in many sports.

"We want to get products [based on] university research out for public use, for public good and for public benefit."

 UNIVERSITY OF
MARYLAND

Lita Nelsen



During her 30-year career as director of the Technology Licensing Office at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, Lita led a team that negotiated approximately 100 licenses and helped start more than 20 companies each year.

"The movement of knowledge and discoveries from MIT to the general public has had a major impact on economic development and job creation, both nationally and locally. Patent protection is critical to these activities."

