

JHTT Staff Participate and Present at the 2006 AUTM

By Leigh A. Penfield, Assistant Director, Johns Hopkins Technology Transfer

At the 2006 Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM) Annual Meeting held on March 2-4, 2006 in Orlando, Florida, Johns Hopkins Technology Transfer (JHTT) staff were not only in attendance, but were also actively presenting on different educational topics and workshop tracks.

Jill A. Tarzian Sorensen, Executive Director of JHTT, participated in a panel on “Technology Transfer and Economic Development” that discussed how technology transfer offices can engage in economic development activities both domestically and globally. A second panel in which she participated was on “Licensing Law Developments: How Recent Decisions Affect University Technology Transfer”. Both panels were well-attended and permitted interactive engagement between the panel and attendees.

R. Keith Baker, Director, Technology Licensing, participated in an education panel on “A Different Perspective on Licensing: Industry Talks to Academia”. This session covered many issues that are problematic for researchers in obtaining materials, licensing issues that universities face with receipt of federal funding and the like. This highly interactive, standing-room-only session permitted a healthy exchange of dialogue about these topics.

Deborah Alper, Director, Intellectual Property Management and Business Development for the Bloomberg School of Public Health, participated in a panel on “IP Turf Battles: Picking, Winning or Refereeing the Fights” which focused on recommendations for working out ownership issues that arise in the technology transfer.

Leigh A. Penfield, Assistant Director, participated in a panel on “License It or Use it” which focused on the faculty start-up efforts of not only The Johns Hopkins University (JHU), but also that of the University of Maryland College Park. Her focus for this panel discussion was a historical perspective on faculty start-ups at JHU, but also focused on the promise of the future of these at JHU. This is due in part by the formation of the Division of Corporate Alliance and the addition of this office to the technology transfer efforts of JHTT.

The theme of the 2006 AUTM Annual Meeting was “Improving Society” and throughout the three-day meeting, attendees heard about the many ways that technology transfer improves the lives of others, contributes to our society and impacts global economies. As an example of this, the Opening Plenary Session discussed Innovative Policies and Practices in Technology Transfer from a Global Health Perspective. Other sessions included Social Innovation in University Technology Management and Lessons Learned from the Development of International and Domestic Consortia, among others.

Poster sessions at this meeting also reflected the overarching theme of improving society and addressing global health such as that presented by the Management of Intellectual Property in Health Research and Development (MIHR) Program for Health

Innovation: An Approach to Building Capacity in Health Product Innovation in Developing Countries.

Attendees of this meeting included licensing professionals from national and international academic institutions, government, and industry affiliates, business development professionals from the same sectors, law firm affiliates, individuals from foundations and venture funds and vendors that support the technology transfer field. Networking opportunities were frequent and energetic as attendees mingled and connected with individuals from around the globe, with whom, prior contact has been limited to e-mail or telecons in the course of day-to-day technology transfer. For all, the magic of Disneyworld and the warm balmy weather of Orlando highlighted the 2006 AUTM Annual Meeting as an event for the senses, as well as for the mind.