Ms. Annemie Nuyts Named IPI-Award Recipient 2016

Dear Patent Information Colleagues:

IPI-Award 2016 Recognizes Ms. Annemie Nuyts for Contribution to EPO Search Systems

When it comes to the dissemination of data, a forward-thinking mindset is part of the fabric of the European Patent Office. In particular, this is seen manifested in certain individuals who have been responsible for putting into practice the EPO’s remit for making quality patent information readily available to all.

Annemie Nuyts is one such individual. She worked at the EPO from the early days of the introduction of the EPOQUE system in the 1980’s that led to dramatically improved access to patent information globally. EPOQUE was the precursor to the Esp@cenet system that we know today, and which is an indispensable resource for patent information users around the world.

From the outset, Annemie worked tirelessly to develop EPOQUE. She set the highest standards for user satisfaction by extensively gathering feedback and fully integrating user requirements into the system. Under her auspices, EPOQUE rapidly grew from an initial 23 databases to more than 100, incorporating internal EPO data, and standardizing data between more than 80 national offices and external commercial providers.

With Annemie’s perseverance and drive for quality, she was instrumental in developing a full suite of patent examiner applications, including a Viewer that matched the highest ergonomics standards. In fact, the Viewer quickly became an essential feature of EPOQUE, and its special interface was an inspiration for many of the commercial online patent databases that were soon to follow.

Dr. Jacques Michel, former Vice President at the EPO recalls how “Annemie was deeply involved in the learning process of the Examiners, with the aim of defining the best methodology for searching patents and identifying the best state-of-the-art. Based on her own experience and her permanent interaction with the Examiners, she was able to design and manage the development of the whole EPOQUE system, used by more than 5000 EPO internal users, as well as all the national patent offices under the European Patent Convention, plus more than 1500 users at patent offices in non-member states such as Brazil, Mexico, Thailand, Australia and China.”

The IPI-Award announcement was made at the International Patent Information Conference, IPI-ConfEx in Munich, Germany, on February 29th, 2016 by Ms. Lucy Akers, Chair of the International Selection Board, along with fellow Selection Board members present: Dr. Monika Hanelt, Dr. Tsutomu Kiriyama, and Mr. Aalt van de Kuilen. Following an introduction by IPI-Award founder and sponsor, Mr. Ford Khorsandian, President of Technology & Patent Research (TPR) International, Ms. Lucy Akers, related that: “Annemie’s work at the EPO served as the basis for Esp@cenet and has provided a solid foundation and role model for the world’s leading patent search systems. Her legacy is felt today throughout the world every time that visitors browse the Esp@cenet web site and when examiners search for prior art in many patent offices.”

Annemie Nuyts studied chemistry at RUCA University in Antwerp and gained a Masters of Science in Organic Chemistry from the University of Gent. She started her career at the Institut International des Brevets in 1971 as a search examiner. In 1984 she was transferred to the Principal Directorate Documentation of the EPO as an online expert where in 1989, she joined the EPOQUE directorate.

From 1992 to 2009 she was a Director in the Principal Directorate for Patent Grant Automation, being responsible for search and knowledge products and services, as well as the management, development, maintenance and support of EPOQUE and the search tools used by the EPO examiners and examiners in national patent offices.

Annemie’s vision and dedication has led to the enhanced availability, accessibility and usability of global patent information which, in turn has led to her being recognized for the prestigious IPI-Award.

The IPI Award was established in 2000 to recognize key individuals whose dedication has had a significant and lasting impact on patent information. Sponsor TPR International is a world-leading search firm with 20 years of expertise in successfully completing thousands of patent searching projects in all areas of technology for validity, infringement, patentability and other purposes, as well as providing tailored searching and analysis solutions – www.TPRInternational.com

For further information and photographs of the presentation ceremony at the Hilton Munich Park Hotel:

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