IPI-Award Website Updated - Dr. Sandra Unger Named 2013 Recipient

Dear Patent Information Professional Colleagues:

Dedicated PIUG Pioneer, Dr. Sandra Unger, Receives IPI-Award 2013

Every organization, especially when it is a volunteer group, depends on the dedication of its volunteers. Growth and survival often falls upon the shoulders of a few individuals who, through their leadership and hard work, direct the organization from strength to strength. The Patent Information Users Group (PIUG) owes much of its success today to the vision and determination of Dr. Sandra Unger, who has contributed her talents and energy to the PIUG for well over a decade.

Starting in 1995, Sandra served as the PIUG Discussion List System Operator, facilitating electronic communications in the pre-email days. By 1996, she had become the organization’s Vice Chair, and afterwards held the position of Chair. From 1998 to 2000, Sandra ran the PIUG Annual Meetings and ushered in a time of unprecedented growth. The organization experienced a surge in membership and participation, including expansion to the international community, which facilitated learning and development of the latest patent information topics and techniques in a rapidly-changing technological environment.

As well as her constancy in steering the PIUG and taking a leadership role as a critical driving force for the strategic vision, Sandra is credited with being involved in the incorporation of the PIUG and for taking personal risk to enable the forum to become a reality. Now that the PIUG is celebrating its 25th year, it is extremely fitting that Sandra Unger is being bestowed with the highly prestigious patent information industry accolade, the IPI-Award. On hearing the news, Dr. Unger thanked the IPI-Award Selection Board and expressed how deeply honored she was to be chosen for the award, adding that: “Actually, ‘stunned’ is a better term from my reaction!”

The IPI-Award announcement was made at the International Patent Information Conference, IPI-ConfEx www.IPI-ConfEx.com in Seville, Spain on March 11, 2013 by Ms. Lucy Akers, Chair of the International Selection Board, along with fellow Selection Board members present: Dr. Monika Hanelt, Dr. Gerhard Fischer, Dr. Tsutomu Kiryama 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, shared how the IPI-Award Selection Board recognized Dr. Unger’s selfless service to the PIUG and related how “Dr. Unger’s belief in the patent information community’s need for such a forum showed incredible dedication to the patent information industry, providing a very high standard we may all strive to reach.”

Sandra holds a Ph.D. in organometallic chemistry from Michigan State University under the direction of Dr. Robert Grubbs (Nobel Prize winner) and a Masters of Computer Science from the New Jersey Institute of Technology. She joined Exxon in 1979 and trained under the late Dr. Stuart Kaback (himself a former PIUG Board member and IPI-Award recipient) to learn the subtle art of patent searching. In Sandra’s nearly 34 years at ExxonMobil, her primary responsibilities have been patent searching and designing databases to store, analyze, and distribute the results of patent searches. Sandra received a US patent (US5721910) on a database design for organizing patents and technical documents.

Sandra has also conducted fun patent sessions for ‘Take Our Kids to Work Day’, for most of the past 10 years. Sandra has chosen bizarre or high tech topics that allow the kids to learn about inventions in a fun way, and how to protect inventions with patents. There is always lots of hands-on interaction for the kids to learn by doing. Topics have included patents about driverless car robots, solar jumping grasshoppers, Harry Potter (invisible cloaks and flying broomsticks) and other weird patents such as floating furniture!

The award itself, consisting of a plaque and $3000 honorarium, is to be presented at the upcoming PIUG meeting in Alexandria, Virginia, at the special Gala Dinner on April 29th – www.PIUG.org.

The IPI Award was established in 2000 to recognize and celebrate key individuals whose dedication has had a significant and lasting impact on patent information. Sponsor TPR International is a world-leading search firm with more than 18 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, visit www.IPI-Award.com, or contact Trudi Jones, Trudi@TPRInternational.com, +1 (858) 592 9084.

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