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Driving LESI Forward Through Change

By James E. Malackowski,
President, LES International



There are a number of tried and true clichés to describe the final chapter in my term as LESI President. I have actually put together quite a long list from “light at the end of the tunnel” to “the experience of a lifetime.” Interestingly, the substance of such phrases rings true—service as your President is uniquely rewarding and there is a natural transition of leadership that begins long before the passing of the gavel at the International Management and Delegates Meeting following the LES (USA & Canada) Annual Meeting.

This is my last column as LESI President and, more importantly, I want to take the opportunity to thank everyone who helped to make this year a current success, but also a turning point for three key initiatives: the National President’s Council, the Global Technology Impact Forum and the retention of an Executive Director for LESI.

The National President’s Council is now operating independent of the LESI Board, exactly as hoped. We have more fully engaged the network of current LES Society Presidents, but excitingly, we have also brought back to the LES campfire many, many of our former National Presidents. I want to thank Arnaud Michel, Francois Painchaud and Peter Hess as they led the initial meetings of the NPC, effectively putting the program on a solid foundation.

Time will determine if the LESI Global Technology Impact Forum and related Invent For Humanity™ Technology Transfer Exchange Fair become a permanent part of the LES calendar. However, the GTIF session held this past January has already made a strong and long lasting positive impression on the NGO community regarding LES and its voice in the global technology transfer community. GTIF was the result of endless hours from too many volunteers to mention. That said, those involved know that without Kristi Stathis and her team at KLS Edition, GTIF would not have happened. If there ever was a need for a “way above and beyond the call of duty special note of appreciation,” Kristi has earned it (and not even as a member, but as a ‘permanent accompanying guest’)! Thank you also to Kevin Nachtrab as incoming President, as well as Hector Chagoya and Martin Schneider as incoming Co-Chairs for continuing GTIF in Geneva, Switzerland on January 20-22, 2013.

As described in more detail below, LESI administrative needs have continued to grow to the point where the Board and International Delegates have determined to engage our first Executive Director. A sincere thank you here both to Jeann Khoo who has been key to this year’s

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operations, but also to Ken Schoppmann who has mentored Joenn and assisted me directly in the recruitment of our new Executive Director. Their work combined with the efforts of the LESI Board and its Committees has furthered greatly the mission of our organization. Thank you to all.

As my term is not quite yet complete, let me also take a few paragraphs to update you generally on my recent and planned final activities as LESI President.

LES Pan-European Conference

Ever since my first visit more than 20 years ago, Rome has been my favorite city in the world (outside of my home town Chicago). It was a true delight therefore that the 2012 LES Pan-European Conference was held in Rome last month. I not only attended the conference, but also had the privilege of chairing one of the plenary panels and speaking at one of the workshops. Attendance at the meeting exceeded all expectations and the organizing committee led by LES Italy President Roberto Dini set a new high water mark for offsite events. Dinner at the Tor Crescenza Castle one night followed the next by a private tour of the Vatican Museums and Sistine Chapel with dinner in the Braccio Nuovo della Pigna was an 'experience of a lifetime!' (See first paragraph.)

Preparation for Final LES Tour in 2012

As reported in my prior *les Nouvelles* letters, LES has taken me this year to Singapore, Hong Kong, the Philippines, New Zealand, Brazil and Italy. In the little time left, I have one more grand tour beginning in Japan for the LES Asia Pacific Meeting followed quickly by visits to LES Scandinavia, LES Mexico and then Toronto for the Annual Meeting of LES (USA & Canada). I would like to thank the leadership of each Society, which not only made me feel incredibly welcomed, but also presented programs sharing unique insight on IP market development in their region. I often had the chance to present my consolidated views of the IP economic update at these events and am happy to share this presentation with you (located on the LESI website or available at www.OceanTomo.com).

LES Administrative Office

As reported in the last issue of *les Nouvelles*, I have begun in earnest to recruit an Executive Director for LESI at the decision of the Board and with the support of the Delegates. To give you some insight as to our efforts and progress, we began by forming a small selection committee comprising François Painchaud, Ken Schoppmann and myself. I drafted a position description with the Board's input and we widely posted the opportunity to consider

a diverse set of professionals. More than 30 qualified applicants contacted LES for the position. This list was narrowed down to five individuals for telephone interviews by the Committee. Those interviewed held remarkable prior positions from both professional associations as well as the IP field, including former/current attorneys, inventors, patent office administrators and clerks for the Court of Appeals for the Federal Circuit. The phone interviews have been completed and the committee is now meeting two of the candidates in person with the expectation of retaining our first LESI Executive Director as an independent contractor with a two year term prior to the Delegates meeting in Toronto. The primary goal of the two year position is to fully understand and develop the role that an Executive Director can play in furthering the strategic goals of LESI.

Robert Goldscheider

Anyone who has been to a single LES conference has undoubtedly made a new professional if not personal friend. For many of us who have attended LES meetings around the globe for years, if not decades, such friendships deepen to become some of the most important and meaningful anyone can experience. For me, one such friendship, which began as a mentorship more than 20 years ago, was with Bob Goldscheider. Bob took me under his stewardship when I was in my early twenties and never tired of answering my questions or encouraging me to reach for greater goals. Bob passed away on July 4, 2012. He is survived by his devoted wife Janet and a loving family.

I draw special attention to Bob and his contribution here not only because of my personal regard for him and his work, but also because of the tireless contribution Bob made to LES. For those of you who knew Bob, he was firm of opinion and confidence, but also of intelligence and a pioneering spirit in our profession. For his evangelism regarding the "25% Rule" to his passion for the current technology and client of the day, he will be remembered. For his service to LES he was awarded the Gold Medal, our highest honor. For his giant heart, which undoubtedly cared about everyone who he got to know, he will be missed.

Thank you again for the opportunity to serve as LESI President. I am looking forward to attending the Asia Pacific Regional Conference in Tokyo, the LES (USA & Canada) Annual Meeting in Toronto, and a number of individual Societies in between. As always, I look forward to hearing directly from you on ways to further improve the work of our organization. ■