

**Response to Questions for the Record from Susie Armstrong  
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Subcommittee on Courts, Intellectual Property and the Internet  
Committee on the Judiciary, U.S. House of Representatives

*March 27, 2019 Hearing on “Lost Einsteins: Lack of Diversity in Patent Inventorship and the Impact on America’s Innovation Economy”*

**Questions from Representative Martha Roby**

1. *What recommendations have you for the United States Patent & Trademark Office and the Small Business Administration to help promote the participation of women and minorities in entrepreneurship activities and the patent system?*

It is critical that the United States Patent & Trademark Office (USPTO) and the Small Business Administration (SBA) continue to promote participation of women, minorities, and other underrepresented groups in the patent system.

The USPTO and SBA must do more to publicize their resources and make sure that the information is easily accessible on their websites. The SBA should work to make sure that women and minorities are familiar with the Small Business Innovation (SBIR) program and Small Business Technology Transfer Program (STTR) program. Both of these programs help women and minorities participate in technological innovation and often many inventors are unfamiliar with these programs.

The USPTO should continue to promote programs like the “All in STEM Initiative” to encourage more girls and women to pursue STEM degrees. The USPTO should also continue to develop programs for elementary school children that will help them learn about intellectual property. These type of programs may help encourage underrepresented groups to participate in the patent system. At Qualcomm, we have worked to develop the Thinkabit Lab initiative, which has helped students learn about technology and invention.

The USPTO and SBA should continue to hold workshops for women and minority inventors so they can learn about intellectual property and patents. The USPTO should also coordinate with their regional offices to make sure that women and minorities know about these programs and engage with members of the local communities. The USPTO should partner with inventors who mentor young women and minority entrepreneurs at universities. Each of these suggestions would help promote the participation of women and minorities in the patent system.

2. *Can you explain why it is beneficial to companies to ensure that all of their inventors are aware of the value of patents, both to the employees individually and to the overall health of their employer, so that companies consider filing patent applications on all valuable inventions conceived by their employees?*

For complex technology companies, success requires the collaboration of diverse teams of employees. No one inventor, no matter how brilliant, can create singular solutions to these tough engineering problems. Qualcomm works to ensure that all employees are trained on the value of patents and licenses to the innovation process, and the importance of intellectual property to both company and their individual success.

At Qualcomm, we are intensely focused on creating a diverse environment and creating opportunities for women and minorities to participate and contribute to our innovations. Patenting an invention is not only a point of pride for the company and the inventors—although Qualcomm celebrates all our inventors as individuals and teams—but is a major component of our performance review process and promotion decisions. Ensuring our employees know that patenting activity will be taken into account in these ways helps to underscore the importance of these activities to the company and the employee's career.

Moreover, patents are a powerful addition to the resume of any engineer. When an engineer applies to work at Qualcomm, we will consider his or her status as an inventor during the hiring process. And while we hope to retain our engineers, a patented inventor who seeks to move on from Qualcomm will find greater success in the job market.