



Press Release

AUTM's New Chair, Board Members Take Office

(Austin, Texas – February 22, 2023) – AUTM, a global non-profit whose Members support the commercialization of academic research, today welcomed its new Chair, Almesha L. Campbell, PhD, the Assistant Vice President for Research and Economic Development at Jackson State University (JSU).

In her role, Campbell provides strategic direction and vision for defining partnerships in commercialization and innovation between JSU and other institutions, funding agencies and industry stakeholders. She was instrumental in the development of JSU's new Center for Innovation and Entrepreneurship and leads National Science Foundation-funded initiatives designed to help change the perception of underrepresented minorities in both of those fields.

Campbell, who has been an AUTM Member since 2010, is the first Black person and the first from a Historically Black College and University (HBCU) to chair the AUTM Board of Directors. She spoke at the close of AUTM's Annual Meeting in Austin, urging attendees to join her in expanding AUTM's vision of advancing innovation through inclusivity and collaboration.

“As equity, diversity, and inclusion have come to the forefront of corporate consciousness, AUTM was an early leader in ensuring that inclusion was adopted as one of its pillars,” Campbell told the audience. “We have made progress to ensure access to people from diverse backgrounds, international regions, and industries – but we understand that more is to be done. So I thank AUTM's Board for selecting me now and giving me this opportunity to help continue the organization's vision.”

AUTM CEO Stephen Susalka said of Campbell “Almesha has been a passionate and strategic advocate for inclusivity as a catalyst for impactful innovation, and her guidance will help AUTM build on the progress we as an organization have made so far toward realizing that vision.”

The Board on Sunday selected Andrew Maas, Associate Vice President for Research overseeing the office of Innovation and Ecosystem Development at Louisiana State University, as Chair-elect. He has more than 15 years of experience in technology licensing and commercialization. Maas will succeed Campbell when she steps down as Chair in February 2024.

Joining the Board this year are newly installed Directors elected to three-year terms:

- **Megan Aanstoos, PhD, RTTP, is a Licensing and New Ventures Manager for Kentucky Commercialization Ventures**, where her primary responsibilities include outreach and education on matters related to commercialization along with assessing, managing, and licensing intellectual property developed at KCV Partner Institutions.
- **Sadhana Chitale, PhD, MBA, is Senior Director of Life Sciences/Technology Transfer at New York University**, where she oversees all life science related technology commercialization activities, leads the translational drug discovery unit and helps university-based startups find coaching and connections.
- **Daniel Dardani, CLP, is Director of Physical Sciences and Digital Innovations Licensing and Corporate Alliances at Duke University**, where he is responsible for outreach, marketing and licensing for physical sciences and digital innovations, and investing translational funds in nascent Duke-developed technologies.
- **Becky Hernandez is Director for Operations, Patents and Compliance at the California Institute of Technology**, where she manages IS/IT infrastructure, office space, federal IP compliance, data management and data integrity and associated technology transfer administrative processes.
- **Tatiana Litvin-Vechnyak, PhD, is Vice President for Technology Commercialization at Georgetown University**, where she oversees all activities related to technology transfer, management of the university's intellectual property assets and support for entrepreneurial ventures based on university-developed technology.

About AUTM

AUTM is the nonprofit leader in efforts to educate, promote and inspire professionals to support the development of academic research that changes the world and drives innovation forward. Our community is composed of more than 3,000 members who work in more than 800 universities, research centers, hospitals, businesses and government organizations around the globe. To learn more about AUTM, visit www.autm.net.

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