

## Issue Highlights—Special Topic Section

- **Sandra S. Park,**  
of the American Civil Liberties Union, analyzes the litigation to invalidate the patents on BRCA1 and BRCA2 genes—genes important for identifying breast and ovarian cancer—and shows how feminist advocacy is effective in understanding and mitigating the broader impacts of intellectual property decisions on women’s lives.
- **Kathleen Sohar et al.,**  
representing The Association of University Technology Managers Women Inventor’s Committee, offer a broad overview of women’s engagement in the technology transfer process at universities, specifically noting the necessity for establishing a baseline of data for tracking gender in the invention process and for raising awareness of these disparities as a first step towards addressing inequalities.
- **Nichole R. Mercier et al.,**  
of Washington University in St. Louis, discuss the successful efforts of their institution to increase women inventorship through targeted programming, which has resulted in both growth in the number of disclosures submitted to their technology transfer office and the number of patent applications filed.
- **The University of Michigan’s Kelly B. Sexton and North Carolina State’s Frances S. Ligler**  
discuss the necessity of a university invention culture that promotes the engagement of its full talent pool and suggest some practical steps to accomplish this, including reaching out to women inventors and demystifying the patenting and commercialization process.
- **BD2’s Berna Demiralp**  
and co-authors focus on women’s participation in STEM fields, as these are the fields that are most closely tied to the current innovation economy, and highlight the current gaps while also taking stock of the prospects for change and opportunities for policy improvements.

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- **Holly Fechner and Matthew S. Shapanka,** of Covington & Burling LLP, review disparities in patenting and commercialization that show the disadvantages that women, people of color, and lower-income individuals face in obtaining patents as well as offering a variety of recommendations for beginning to close the gap.
- **Lemelson-MIT’s Stephanie Couch et al.,** analyzed results from the InvenTeams initiative for high school students, revealing the factors that supported and constrained young women inventors—information that may be critical for designing effective programming to promote women inventorship.
- **AAAS-Lemelson’s Yolanda L. Comedy and the United States Patent and Trademark Office’s (USPTO) Elizabeth L. Dougherty** highlight the importance of role models to encourage the next generation of women inventors. Specifically, they discuss women who have broken through the many barriers to become major inventors and now share their stories as educational inspiration through the AAAS-Lemelson Invention Ambassadors program.
- **In the USPTO’s commentary, Linda Hosler** draws attention to the agency’s efforts to narrow the gender gap in patenting and invention by fostering a flexible and fair workplace and supporting programming that honors and encourages women inventors.
- **The NAI Fellow Profile focuses on Dr. Michelle Khine,** of the University of California, Irvine, who discusses her new work on wearable health monitors and point of care technologies, the importance of supporting junior faculty and graduate students in the early stages of their careers, and how we might go about addressing the gender gap in invention.

## Issue Highlights—General Section

- **Chinonye C. Nnakwe et al.**

review the history of the NSF I-Corps® program, discuss the critical difference it has made in research funding, and look to the future of the program and additional research funding efforts.

- **The University of Southern California’s Neil G. Siegel and California State University, Dominguez Hills’ Marek A. Suchenek**

dig into the complex topic of software patenting, offering a brief history of the legal foundations of software patenting and arguing for the net positive effects of the practice despite its problems.

- **The *NAI Chapter Spotlight***

focuses on the innovation and invention community at the University of Southern California.

- ***Innovation and Action***

features innovation at Arizona State University in cancer therapeutics and carbon recycling.