



Kevin Cullen

## From Sceptic to Advocate: The Story of a Convert

What defines a profession? At some point in history there must have been groups of doctors or lawyers who thought “we must put a system in place to ensure quality in our field and to move away from a situation where enthusiastic amateurs make it up as they go along. We have the responsibility to establish a certain level of knowledge and skill in our field so that those whom we serve don’t have to just hope for the best.” These forward thinkers would have been the people who began the formation of their professions by defining the body of knowledge, skills and competences that members of that profession would need - sound familiar? Now ask yourself, if you needed a medical operation, would you choose for it to be performed by an enthusiastic amateur or a qualified professional?

Maybe tech transfer isn’t life and death in that sense but, never the less, if we consider tech transfer to be a profession, there are certain things that need to be put in place – the body of knowledge, the professional body, and the definition of skills and competences. Then, the question arises, who should put these

standards in place? My own view is that they have to be put in place by the professional practitioners themselves. Nothing else can command the respect of the people who work in the field and anything else is simply an administrative exercise rather than the next step in developing our profession.

A few years ago when PraxisUnico, AUTM and ASTP issued surveys asking about professional accreditation, certification, and recognition for tech transfer, I was one of the many who marked “not important/wouldn’t make a difference”. But, after further contemplation, I went from sceptic to advocate, from doubter to believer, and here is why. If you believe that tech transfer is a genuine profession, it is your duty to help to establish and develop it just as the pioneers of other professions have done before us.

ATTP, the Alliance of Technology Transfer Professionals, established by five leading and like-minded associations (AUTM, ASTP, ATMT, KCA and PraxisUnico), has put into place a process to become recognized for demonstrated competencies in our profession. It is not exam based - no one could envision a comprehensive examination that would cover the massive range of skills and competences that make up tech transfer. Instead it requires applicants to show a certain degree of training and experience and to demonstrate the ability to apply that and create results. Acquiring this experience and training, and developing a track record of results certainly requires a significant investment of time and resources. However, having achieved that qualification, the application process to become a Registered Technology Transfer Professional (RTTP) is relatively painless and typically requires only an hour or so to complete.

Again, I am a convert. I can now see how we are on the cusp of becoming a recognized profession. We, the practitioners, have a duty to take those last few steps to make this a reality. ATTP is doing that and we should be grateful to the five founding associations for showing leadership and vision in this area.

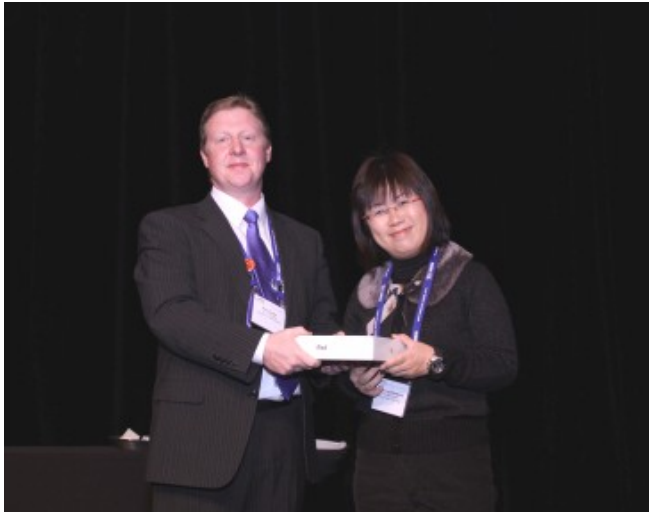
Personally, if I were recruiting for a position in my office and had the choice between two qualified and competitive candidates, an RTTP designation would tip the scales because I would know that a professional third party who is well acquainted with our business had given that candidate the RTTP seal of approval.

*Kevin Cullen is the Director of Research and Enterprise at the University of Glasgow and Vice President of the Association of European Science and Technology Transfer Professionals*

### Meet Our RTTPs

- Mark Anderson
- Penny Attridge
- Nicole Baute Honoree
- Louis Berneman
- Mark Bloom
- Daryl Boudreaux
- Alison Campbell,
- Phil Clare
- Kevin Cullen
- Stewart Davis
- Dominic De Groote
- Rudy Dekeyser
- Kathleen Denis
- Bernard Denis
- Patrick Di Stefano
- Barbara Eccles
- Joern Erselius
- Tim Fell
- Sean Flanigan
- David Gulley
- Page Heller
- Alistair Hick
- Richard Kordal
- Angela Kukula
- Gabor Lamm
- Patricia Latter
- Gionata Leone
- Kirsten Leute
- Marc Malandro
- Jane Muir
- Lita Nelsen
- Sue O'Hare
- David Owen
- John Perchorowicz
- Kirstin Rencher
- Thomas Schmidt
- Jeff Skinner
- Andy Sierakowski
- Karen Smith
- Christian Stein
- Simran Trana
- Ashley Stevens
- Paul van Dun
- Koen Verhoef
- Vijay Vijayaraghavan
- Pat Weeks

# ATTP Connects with 1,800 AUTM Conference Attendees



Kevin Cullen congratulates the iPad winner

The Association of University Technology Managers (AUTM) 2011 Annual Meeting proved to be a valuable opportunity for the Alliance of Technology Transfer Professionals (ATTP) to create awareness and recruit those within the tech transfer ecosystem. More than 1,800 attendees from across the United States, Canada and beyond, gathered in Las Vegas, Nevada this spring; providing ATTP representatives with face-to-face networking time to educate tech transfer professionals on the value of becoming a Registered Technology Transfer Professional (RTTP).

The Alliance of Technology Transfer Professionals (ATTP) was established in 2009 to provide a global standard of professional achievement. ATTP connects more than 5,000 technology transfer practitioners in 67 countries and provides them with access to training and professional development to demonstrate leadership to our members and for the advancement of our profession.

AUTM generously supported ATTP marketing efforts by providing a booth, giving those interested in becoming a Registered Technology Transfer Professional the opportunity to learn more about the process.

ATTP board and committee members staffed the booth and spoke with tech transfer professionals with all levels of experience. During the Plenary and Awards Presentation, Kevin Cullen (director of research & enterprise at the University of Glasgow) presented one lucky meeting attendee with an iPad for visiting the ATTP booth and wearing 'Ask me about RTTP' lapel button.

ATTP offers educational opportunities and challenges candidates to develop their knowledge and abilities, helping to ensure excellence in our profession. To learn more about the benefits of ATTP membership and the RTTP registration process, visit the ATTP Web site at [www.attp.info](http://www.attp.info).



Become an RTTP Now with Our New 3 Step Application!

RTTP Applicants Can Now [Pay with Paypal](#)

Application Deadline: October 13, 2011

[www.attp.info](http://www.attp.info)

**A T T P**  
alliance of technology transfer professionals

To learn about upcoming training opportunities, click our founding associations' logos below.

