



Association of University Technology Managers®
Advancing Discoveries for a Better World®

AUTM 2017-2018 Election Board of Directors



Michael Rondelli, JD, MBA

*Associate Vice President, Innovation and Commercialization
University of North Texas*

Candidate's Background

Michael Rondelli joined the University of North Texas in December, 2015 as the Associate Vice President of Innovation and Commercialization. In this role, he is responsible for managing the technology transfer function within UNT as well as other projects related to intellectual property negotiations, development of new research clusters, and developing entrepreneurial activities on campus. Prior to UNT, Michael was the Director of Licensing for the University of Southern California's Stevens Center for Innovation where he was able to turn around the licensing function which was under-performing license goals for many years prior to his term. Prior to that, Michael built San Diego State University's Technology Transfer Office into one of the most efficient university licensing operations, generating over \$1.5 million in annual royalty revenue with only a \$110,000 patent budget. Prior to technology transfer, Michael worked in corporate finance and venture capital in New York City. He earned his BSBA with honors in Business from Washington University in St. Louis, his MBA in Finance from Texas Christian University and his JD from the University of San Diego School of Law.

Candidate Questionnaire

1. Why do you want to be on the AUTM Board of Directors (What motivates you to join the AUTM Board of Directors?)

As a long-time AUTM member, I feel that it is my obligation to give back to the organization that has provided so much value to me and my career. Additionally, I see how rapidly the communities around are industry are changing and believe that my combination of experiences and skills will help guide AUTM to provide the most value to its members as our world changes around us.

2. Have you served in a volunteer leadership role for other organizations? If so, please explain.

Besides for AUTM, I have been a board member of the San Diego Zoo's BioMimicry Council (2009-2015).

3. What special experience do you have that you feel will benefit AUTM and its members (what makes you stand out above all others)?

My experience in an unfunded, very small office. I demonstrated my ability to make a huge impact on a university that had no history before my tenure and even with my financial success at the university, I was constantly challenged to provide more with less resources than any other university TTO similar to our research expenditures. I think that entrepreneurial experience will help cut through the issues that block some meaningful changes at AUTM in the past.

4. What do you see as the major strategic issues facing technology transfer today?

There are more than just one that is challenging the field. Certainly, the threat of new patent and other laws related to federally-funded research will make a huge impact on the profession. Additionally, time is more and more of an issue in deal making; our profession needs to be prepared better for doing deals faster to work with industry's needs. The cost of patent prosecution is going to cause many universities to take a deep look at returning all IP to funding sources. The expected reduction and overall change in how faculty win research awards is going to create massive issues at most universities and cause a more critical reliance on multi-institution transactions and working with industrial partners and funders.

5. What would be your number one goal as a member of the Board of Directors for AUTM? (List the issues you would like the Board to focus on for next few years.)

Create best practices on how universities can commercialize online courseware as content delivery; standardized policies and procedures similar to how successful the UBMTA has managed to make the sharing of biological materials much easier.

Change of the way content is delivered at our conferences to allow for more engagement.

Engage with legislators to demonstrate what we do and why we do it that way so that it imprints how laws must take us into account if they want to promote new technologies and job growth.

6. How do the terms (both responsibilities and time commitment) of the position fit in with your other responsibilities?

My VP of Research supports me spending time on AUTM; he recommended I try to join the Board as we see the position as a way to serve the needs of my campus.

7. What is a challenge AUTM faces that you feel could be addressed by strategic thinking and discussion at the Board level?

The growth in corporate funded research on campus impacts ownership of IP; I think every company I have ever negotiated with has said that "all of the other universities we fund assign their IP to us"; as the industry association for our field, I believe the Board can help all of AUTM members by providing clear examples of best practices that would disable this argument.

8. How has AUTM benefitted you in your work and career?

I cannot imagine what the last 14 years of my life would be like had I not had AUTM; I do not think I would have learned how to be great at my job without AUTM's training and networking. Even when I decide to solve a TT problem differently, I do so based on how others have approached the issues and had their results shared with me.

9. Is there anything else you would like AUTM members to know about you before they vote in this year's election?

As a past venture capitalist, my perspective on how we work with companies drives my interest in the Board. I think my skill set on the Board will help AUTM expand the value it provides its members.

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