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Deborah Stephens appointed to permanent role of Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the USPTO

Stephens will serve as principal advisor to the agency on the design, development, and management of its information systems and technology.

June 16, 2026

The United States Patent and Trademark Office (USPTO) announces the appointment of Deborah Stephens as the Chief Information Officer (CIO) for the agency.

As CIO, Stephens will serve as principal advisor to the agency on the design, development, and management of its information systems and technology. She has served at the USPTO for more than 25 years in multiple leadership roles, including most recently as Acting CIO.

An award-winning executive and visionary, Stephens previously served as the Assistant Commissioner for the Office of Patent Information Management, leading IT modernization for Patents systems. She also acted as a Deputy Commissioner for Patents.

Her servant leadership and technical expertise will continue to guide IT teams to deliver value and support for our global customers 24/7. Under her stewardship, the USPTO has accomplished meaningful changes, including:

- Transitioning to a new operating model with IT work organized around business products versus projects to streamline delivery.
- Retiring decades-old technology in Patents and Trademarks, paving the way for modern digital services.
- Migrating 60% of IT products to the Cloud, enabling new AI milestones, and better system performance and security.

- Rolling out new AI tools agency-wide, driving adoption across business units, and scaling AI workforce training.
- Launching the Open Data Portal with 40 terabytes of data on American innovation.

Stephens has served as a national voice for women in technology and has been a speaker at tech conferences nationwide. In 2023, she received the prestigious Roger W. Jones Award for Executive Leadership from the School of Public Affairs at American University. Stephens has also volunteered her time for 18 years with the Girl Scouts of the USA.

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