

Marybeth Peters
Register of Copyrights, 1994–2010

Marybeth Peters served as Register of Copyrights from August 7, 1994, through December 31, 2010. She had a longer tenure than any other Register with the exception of Thorvald Solberg (1897–1930), the first Register. Her exemplary service to the nation began in the Library of Congress in October 1965. She held numerous positions at all levels in the Copyright Office, beginning on February 14, 1966, with her appointment as an examiner in the former Music Section.

Peters directed the policies and operations of the U.S. Copyright Office, which administers the laws pertaining to copyright and provides advice to Congress. As a respected expert on U.S. and international copyright law and current issues regarding copyright, she maintained a rigorous schedule of domestic and international travel that included presenting lectures and representing the interests of the United States at international meetings as a member of official U.S. delegations. She testified before Congress many times. The author of *The General Guide to the Copyright Act of 1976*, Peters developed and implemented staff training on the 1976 Copyright Act, and she worked closely with staff to develop information for the public on the Act. For this training, she received the Library of Congress Superior Service award in 1977.

Education

- Bachelor of education degree from Rhode Island College in 1961
- Juris doctor degree, with honors, from George Washington University Law School in 1971

Federal positions

- Register of Copyrights: 1994 to 2010
- Acting general counsel, U.S. Copyright Office: 1993–1994
- Policy planning advisor to Register: 1983–1994
- Consultant on copyright law to World Intellectual Property Organization, Geneva: 1989–1990
- Chief of Examining Division, U.S. Copyright Office: 1980–1983
- Chief of Information and Reference Division, U.S. Copyright Office: 1977–1980
- Attorney-advisor and senior attorney-advisor, Office of General Counsel, U.S. Copyright Office: 1975–1977
- Examiner and senior examiner, Music Section of Examining Division, U.S. Copyright Office: 1966–1975
- Shelflister, Library of Congress, Processing Department: 1965–1966

Other professional activities

- Lecturer, Communications Law Institute, Catholic University of America's Columbus School of Law: 1986–1994
- Adjunct professor, University of Miami School of Law: 1980–1986
- Adjunct professor, Georgetown University Law Center: 1977–1978
- Member of intellectual property advisory committees of several law schools

Professional memberships

- American Bar Association and its Intellectual Property Section
- District of Columbia Bar Association and its Intellectual Property Section
- Copyright Society of the U.S.A. and former trustee
- ALAI-USA (Association Littéraire et Artistique Internationale)
- International Technology Law Association, previously Computer Law Association, and former member of its board of directors
- D.C. Computer Law Forum

Selected lectures

- 2010 Sixth Annual Finnegan Distinguished Lecture in Intellectual Property at Washington College of Law, American University
- 2010 Christopher Meyer Memorial Lecture at George Washington University Law School
- 2009 Second Charles Clark Memorial Lecture in London, sponsored by Copyright Licensing Agency, Federation of European Publishers, Publishers Association, Publishers Licensing Society, and London Book Fair
- 2009 Sixth Lexis Nexis Intellectual Property Law Lecture in Global and Technology Law Program at Suffolk University Law School
- 2004 Brace Memorial Lecture at New York University School of Law
- 1996 Horace S. Manges Lecture at Columbia University School of Law

Selected awards

- 2010 Champion of Intellectual Property (CHIP) Award presented by Intellectual Property Law Section of District of Columbia Bar Association for service with distinction to intellectual property community, impact on intellectual property policy, encouragement of innovation and protection of intellectual property rights, and continuous inspiration and advocacy for intellectual property community
- 2010 Outstanding Achievement in IP Award from Managing Intellectual Property magazine
- 2008 Arnold Broide Award for Copyright Advocacy from Music Publishers' Association of the United States
- 2007 State Bar of Texas Entertainment and Sports Law Section's Texas Star Award
- 2006 District of Columbia Chapter of Copyright Society of America for forty years of service to Copyright Office
- 2006 Los Angeles Copyright Society Lifetime Achievement Award
- 2006 American Intellectual Property Law Association Board of Directors Excellence Award for distinguished career in copyright law and U.S. Copyright Office, marked by intellect, insight, and diplomacy in promoting creativity and role of copyright in United States
- 2005 Jefferson Medal Award presented by New Jersey Intellectual Property Law Association in recognition of meritorious and outstanding contributions in support of U.S. Constitution and furtherance of a fundamental principle thereof — "To promote the progress of Science and useful Arts"

- 2004 Business Software Alliance Cyber Champion award
- 2003 Computer Law Association Past President's Award for distinguished service to information technology lawyers worldwide
- 2001 American Society of Media Photographers award for "exemplary fairness and contributions to photographers"
- 1999 Women in Music Touchstone Award for legislative contributions bringing significant benefit to those in music