



# Athena Alliance

Exploring the promise and pitfalls of the global information economy

## 2012 Annual Report

### Introduction

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Athena Alliance is a Washington, D.C.-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit in the vanguard of identifying, understanding, analyzing, and educating on the information, intangibles, and innovation economy—that is, the I-Cubed (I<sup>3</sup>) economy.

Intangible assets—worker skills and know-how, informal relationships that feed creativity and new ideas, high-performance work organizations, formal intellectual property, and brand names—are the new keys to competitive advantage. Information and intangibles—a combination of formal research and informal creativity—drive innovation. These combined elements lead to the productivity and improvement gains needed to maintain prosperity.

Although the economic rules have changed, public policy has not caught up. Government leaders struggle with how to utilize information, foster development of intangibles, promote innovation and competitiveness, and frame policy questions to reflect and address the realities of the changing economic situation.

Athena Alliance undertakes outreach activities to help members of Congress, the administration, constituency groups, and the media better understand these issues and craft informed policies and programs. The Athena Alliance mission is threefold:

- **Reshaping the Debate.** Developing and utilizing information, managing intangibles, and fostering innovation underpin discussions on a variety of subjects, such as intellectual property rights, education and training policy, economic development, and technology and trade policy. Creating new public policies in these areas requires infusing a better understanding of intangibles and the information economy into the public debate.
- **Crafting Strategies, Policies, and Tools.** Global economic shifts call for different ways of thinking about economic activity, different means of promoting and organizing economic opportunities and activities, and different economic policies and programs. We must enlarge the repertoire of strategies, mechanisms, tools, and capabilities that individuals, firms, and communities can use to shape positive economic futures, with special attention to those in danger of being left behind. All Americans must be able to participate—economically and socially—in the emerging information economy. Athena Alliance undertakes practical policy research aimed at creating new solutions to these new sets of problems.
- **Building Partnerships and Sharing Knowledge.** We are not alone in seeking to understand the challenges of the global information economy and the need for new

solutions to confront them. We engage in academic and scholarly research; corporate policy, research, and strategic activities; and practical, on-the-ground efforts with community activists and economic development practitioners to advance the public debate about the information economy. We do this through conferences, workshops, research activities, publications and reports, and public education.

In 2012, we undertook a number of activities—nationally and internationally—to advance our three-pronged mission, including speaking at conferences; publishing articles (including blog articles) ; and conducting outreach to businesses, government leaders, and others.

## Activities

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### *Articles*

In September 2012, Dr. Jarboe published an article titled “[Unlocking the Hidden Value of Intangibles](#),” which ran in *Crossbow* in the United Kingdom as part of the Conservative Party's Annual Conference.

### *Presentations/Panel Discussions/Roundtables*

Dr. Jarboe gave four major presentation in 2012:

- On February 15, he gave a presentation on *Economic growth and competitiveness in the I-Cubed Economy: Information-Innovation-Intangibles* to the Board of Directors of the iRobot Corporation. [Note: a senior officer of iRobot serves on the Athena Alliance Advisory Committee.
- On May 8, he made a presentation on *From IP to IC: Putting intellectual property in context* at the [Manufacturing Innovation 2012](#) conference, sponsored by the Manufacturing Extension Partnership (MEP) of the U.S. Department of Commerce.
- On June 19, he made a presentation on *Intangible Capital: An Overview* at the [Strategic Report Roundtable](#) of the Washington Economic Development Commission (WEDC) held in conjunction with the development of the State of Washington's report [Building a World Class Innovation Ecosystem](#).
- On June 26, he participated in a keynote panel at the Intellectual Property Business Congress held outside Lisbon, Portugal (see <http://www.ipbusinesscongress.com/2012/>).

## Outreach

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The Athena Alliance blog, [The Intangible Economy](#), remained a vital communications and outreach tool. Articles were posted that highlighted new research reports and analyzed public

policy issues affecting the intangible economy. We also continued posting our monthly analysis of U.S.–international trade in intangibles.

In 2012, Dr. Jarboe continued his activities with the Tuesday Innovation Workshop at the Woodrow Wilson Center, the Intangible Asset Finance Society and the Intellectual Capital Practitioners Network. Throughout the year, Dr. Jarboe held discussions on intangible economic issues with various policymakers and attended numerous other meetings, conferences, presentations, and events.

## Organizational Activities

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### *Advisory Committee*

Last year (2011), Athena Alliance took steps to form an Advisory Committee to expand our understanding of the changes taking place in the U.S. and global economy and to offer ways to meet the economic challenges arising in an increasingly interconnected, knowledge-intensive world. The Advisory Committee was formally announced on January 26, 2012 (see the [announcement press release](#)).

Advisory Committee members include Mary Adams, ICapital Advisors (cochair); Andrew Sherman, Jones Day (cochair); Carol Corrado, The Conference Board; Joe Dyer, iRobot; Gabe Fried, Hilco Streambank; Allen Howell, Corporate Flight Management; John Hudson, Deloitte; Bob Laux, Microsoft; and Jim Malackowski, Ocean Tomo. Biographies of Advisory Committee members are on the Athena Alliance website, <http://www.athenaalliance.org/advisory.html>.

The Committee held a meeting on March 21 to discuss possible future directions. These included a business awareness and assistance activity called ICounts and the creation of an innovation & intangible capital policy scorecard upon which we would rank members of Congress. Both projects were explored during the year.

### *Funding Issues*

Unfortunately, neither of the two new directions for Athena Alliance generated immediate revenues for the organization. Thus, because of funding issues, Athena Alliance dramatically scaled back activities during the second half of 2012.

### *Sister organization*

In exploring the idea of a policy scorecard, it was determined that such an activity would be outside the allowed activities of Athena Alliance as a tax-exempt 501(c)(3) organization. As a result, steps were taken, independent from Athena Alliance, to establish a separate entity—the Alliance for Intangible Capital—to possibly undertake these activities. The Alliance for Intangible Capital was still in formation at the end of 2012.

## Athena Alliance Officers

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- Richard Cohon, President, C.N. Burman Company LLC—Chairman
- Kenan Patrick Jarboe, Ph.D.—President
- Joan L. Wills, Director, Center for Workforce Development, Institute for Educational Leadership—Secretary/Treasurer
- Jonathan Low, Partner and Cofounder, Predictiv LLC—Board Member
- Peter Harter, Vice President of Public Affairs, Intellectual Ventures LLC—Board Member

## Contact

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