

TRAILBLAZERS

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

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PIONEER SPIRIT Joseph Mueller came to patent law by chance. “When I started practicing, my firm did a lot of patent litigation, and they gave me a chance to try it. Patent law is a fascinating body of law with interesting policy questions. And even though I don’t have technical training, I enjoy working with those who do. Patent cases also tend to go to trial, and that’s my favorite part of the job.”

TRAILS BLAZED Mueller’s practice has involved cases with multidimensional aspects. “They were disputes that involved not just single cases, but many related cases and patent issues such as contract and equitable issues. Going beyond patent law made those cases unusual. I have worked across disciplines with other lawyers and collaborated on interdisciplinary strategies that were embedded in larger issues.” His cases also frequently involve international jurisdictions. “I have worked on litigation in courts all across Europe and Asia, which involves understanding legal and cultural regimes. I have to be mindful of differences but also consistent.” There are also regulatory overlays between agencies in the United States and overseas. “The culmination of these aspects requires working across disciplines, countries and specialties and collaborating with people with expertise to create a common strategy that will work.”

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS As internationalization grows, it will be increasingly important for lawyers to be familiar with the different approaches taken in different countries and work with international counsel collaboratively. “I’m no expert on French patent law or Taiwanese antitrust matters, but I’m happy to learn enough to work toward a common purpose. The world is becoming more interconnected, and as lawyers, we need to focus not only on the U.S. but also on our ability to collaborate with folks elsewhere to work toward common goals.”