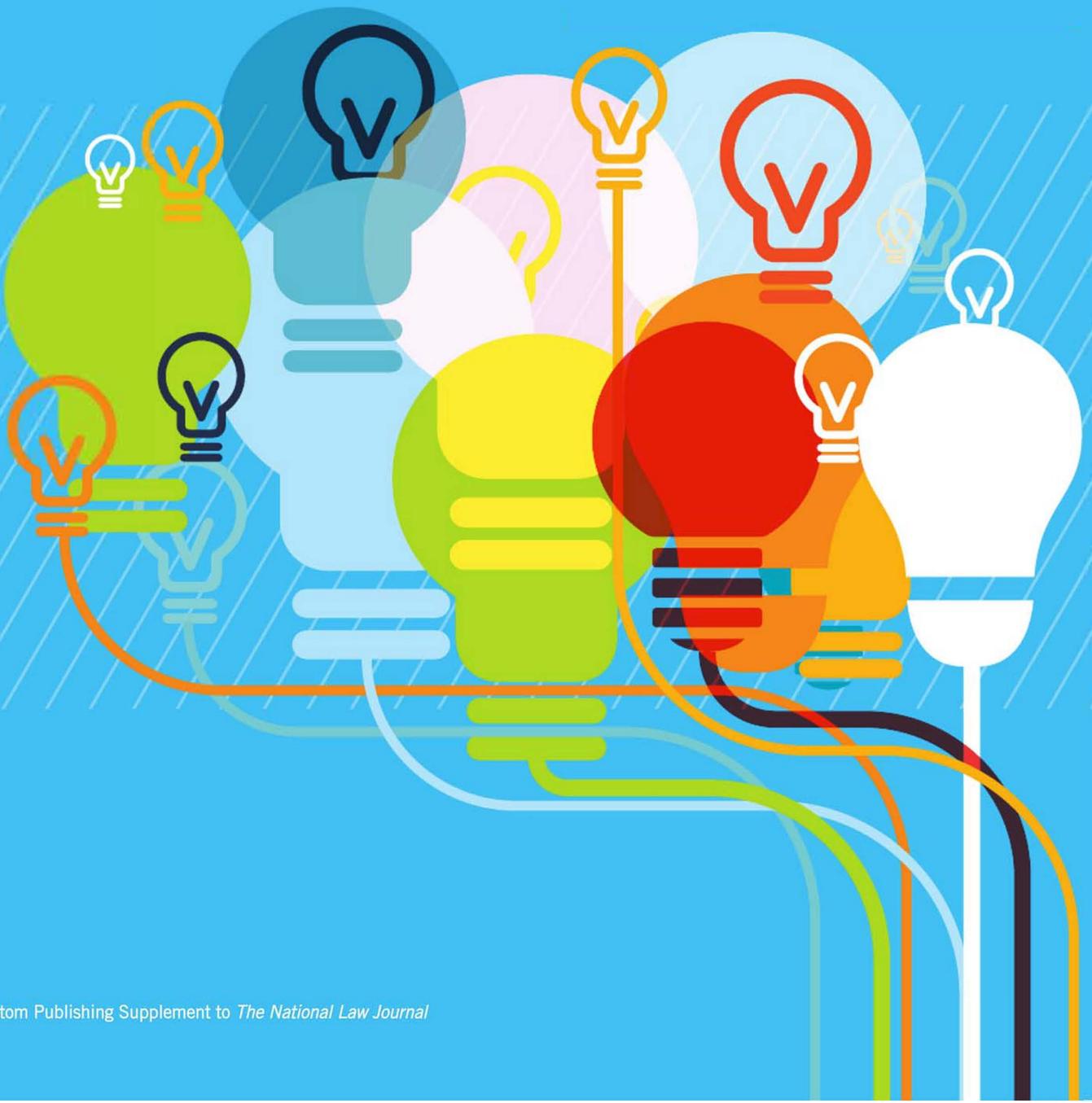


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THE NATIONAL LAW JOURNAL

TRAILBLAZERS

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY





Dear Readers,

Welcome to the fourth annual issue of *Intellectual Property Trailblazers*, a special supplement developed by the business arm of *The National Law Journal*. In the pages that follow, you'll read profiles of people who continue to make their mark in various aspects of legal work in the areas of patent, copyright, trademark and trade secret law. While many of those recognized come at the regulatory and litigation processes from different angles, a common thread ties them together: each has shown a deep passion and perseverance in pursuit of their mission, having achieved remarkable successes along the way.

We received hundreds of nominations cast in favor of this year's honorees and other leading minds will surely be recognized in years to come. We took time to vet each submission and interviewed each *Intellectual Property Trailblazer* to find out what has driven them to reach success. In the pages that follow, I think you'll enjoy reading these short findings.

As with all *NLJ supplements*, the list is never complete. Our goal is to spotlight those making a big difference and the search never ends. If you have someone you feel should make our next list, please reach out and let us know. We hope you enjoy this special section and look forward to hearing from you with your nominations for next year's list!

Congratulations again to this year's honorees.

All the best,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Richard Caruso". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Richard Caruso
Vice President & General Manager, Legal Media

LAURA M. BURSON

SHEPPARD, MULLIN, RICHTER & HAMPTON LLP



PIONEER SPIRIT Laura Burson was pursuing her Ph.D. in biochemistry when she realized lab work was too isolating for her taste. Burson went to law school and ended up in IP litigation.

TRAILS BLAZED Burson's practice now includes major technology firms. For example, she coordinates Honeywell's defense in U.S. and international litigation involving patents relating to environmentally friendly refrigerants and chemicals. "We go in somewhat disadvantaged, but we have come out with some valuable claims and in some cases with all the claims intact. The Patent Trial and Appeal Board reversed examiners' claims in three patents, which was affirmed a few months ago. It's been gratifying to have success in a venue where so many have not." Burson also represented SecurityPoint against infringement by the Transportation Security Administration over the cart and tray method used at commercial airport security checkpoints since 9/11. "It was a more typical district court litigation. We had a validity trial in 2015. It was a bench trial, because the TSA is an arm of the government and the case took place in the Court of Federal Claims. It was another victory for the patent owner. We are now in the damages phase."

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS The pendulum is swinging back at PTAB. "We are now seeing a movement in favor of patent owners. We've been through a cleansing of the worst patents. And the patents that do end up in district court are more likely to survive, since they have already survived scrutiny in the PTAB." In terms of the overall profession, more women and minorities will be involved in leadership roles. "There are initiatives both at the bench and in corporate America that they expect outside counsel to reflect diversity and allow junior lawyers to do more presentations."