

2017

THE NATIONAL LAW JOURNAL

# TRAILBLAZERS

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

### JOSEPH MARAIA

BURNS & LEVINSON LLP

**PIONEER SPIRIT** Joe Maraia worked as a master electrician for 10 years before getting an electrical engineering degree. While working as an engineer at NYNEX, he became intrigued by IP after his father developed an invention he wanted to patent. That led Maraia to law school when he was 33 years old.

**TRAILS BLAZED** Maraia's background has helped him focus on the engineering and biotechnology sectors. He now works on many high-level threat detection patents for Raytheon. "Inventions like high-definition radar and detailed algorithms on objects moving toward us protect everyone, so these patents are really important." He also helped Lumenpulse, based in Montreal, patent an LED light invention that makes it easy to retrofit existing electrical systems to new, high-efficiency LED lighting. "My experience as a master electrician came in handy, since I was able to explain to the examiners how these work in the real world. It moved the process much faster." Maraia's background proved valuable again when he helped EyeGate Pharmaceuticals develop its patent portfolio, then took the company public in 2015. "Their delivery platform allows doctors to push drugs to the back of the eye with an electrical current, instead of a needle."

**FUTURE EXPLORATIONS** Telemedicine will become more popular, with different apps that monitor health. "The part that's getting challenging is with the new America Invents Act and Section 101 patentable subject matter rules. You have to be careful on how to claim the patents so they are not interpreted as a pure business method patents. But these applications are set to become very popular."

