

THE NATIONAL LAW JOURNAL

INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

2014 TRAILBLAZERS & PIONEERS

TERESA “TERRY” STANEK REA

CROWELL & MORING LLP AND C&M INTERNATIONAL, LTD.

PIONEER SPIRIT Terry Rea was working as a pharmacist when she decided to go to law school at night, “except for one year when I worked midnights in a hospital so I could go during the day.” The hard-core science required for patent law appealed to her. “As a patent attorney, you get to be on the cutting edge, without having to stay in the lab.” After law school, she went in-house at specialty chemical company Ethyl Corp. She later moved to Washington, D.C., eventually landing at Crowell & Moring. In 2011, she left the firm to serve as acting and deputy director of the USPTO, returning in 2013.



TRAILS BLAZED Rea was the senior official responsible for the Obama administration’s formulation and implementation of the America Invents Act. “We consulted with Congress to make sure we could do what was necessary.” Some aspects needed implementation within one year, which required a huge surge of rulemaking. “I was able to offer the PTO the outside practitioner’s perspective. I understood how corporations, risk officers and law firms look at things.”

FUTURE EXPLORATIONS Rea believes that IP will continue to be an essential component of the economy for every country in the world. “We will see more countries looking to innovate more than ever before. They are putting a greater value on IP. Their courts and IP systems are becoming more sophisticated.” In the United States, she believes that we are likely to see some changes to reduce pressure on the economy from nonpracticing entities. “We will see some targeted limited specific legislation—and some rule changes—in 2015.”