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# TRAILBLAZERS

## INTELLECTUAL PROPERTY

MIKA REINER MAYER  
COOLEY LLP



**PIONEER SPIRIT** Growing up in a small town in Ohio, Mika Reiner Mayer regularly traveled with her geologist father, and as a young girl designed a travel toothbrush. She pitched her design to Proctor & Gamble, who wrote back recommending she seek the advice of a patent lawyer. “I tried to take my toothbrush to the next level, but my dad said patents cost too much and take too long, so I should forget about it.” She stayed interested, however, and in college took an IP course, then went to law school and later became a patent attorney.

**TRAILS BLAZED** Mayer has focused her practice on intellectual property due diligence reviews, leading hundreds of patent due diligence reviews for small seed life sciences startups to multibillion-dollar companies. “I do more of these than anyone else.” In fact, she started doing so many of these that she formalized a group that specialized in diligence with her old mentor. Her diligence clients include well-known investors such as Andreesen Horowitz, Vivo Ventures, Kleiner Perkins, Sofinnova and Canaan Partners. Mayer specializes in helping them evaluate IP assets in high-stakes matters. “We are not just looking to spot a bunch of issues. We are trying to add value to the deal.”

**FUTURE EXPLORATIONS** In response to the COVID-19 pandemic, Mayer sees increasing activity in the intersection between the life sciences and technology, including artificial intelligence, machine learning, telemedicine and more personalized diagnostics. “All these intersections are somewhat unsettled, with IP protections more favorable in the life sciences than pure technology. It will be interesting to see what happens over the next few years.”