

Trial Lawyer & Law Firm CEO

Janel M. Dressen

With clients, colleagues, and adversaries alike regarding her as a tenacious commercial litigator, a tireless and creative legal advocate, and a strong business leader, you'd think Janel M. Dressen would feel a lot of pressure—but she takes it all in stride. Working hard to resolve her clients' business disputes and always striving to be the most prepared person in the room, Janel stands ready to tackle the most challenging legal problems for her clients and keep her law firm moving forward. She takes pride in knowing her clients and their businesses as well as they do themselves. Colleagues and clients alike know they can expect to receive Janel's laser focus and full measure of determination and excellence at every turn.

Janel's legal practice, resolving disputes for business owners and their companies, spans more than 22 years and includes a long list of successes. While her representations cover a broad range of complex business matters, Janel focuses a significant portion of her practice on shareholder, ownership, and business valuation disputes.



The Path to Becoming Lawyer

Janel grew up in a small farming community in Southern Minnesota. The daughter of a young, single mom, Janel learned at an early age that achieving one's goals in life requires hard work and tough choices. These values also fuelled her competitive spirit and thirst to learn and improve.

By the time Janel was in second grade she knew she wanted to be a lawyer. Janel leaned-in to academics in college in order to excel and accelerate her undergraduate degree to three years, knowing she still had three years of law school remaining. After graduating in the top 4 of her law school class, she moved to the "big" city of Minneapolis and has lived in the Twin Cities ever since.

She has been associated with her present firm, Anthony Ostlund Louwagie Dressen & Boylan P.A. ("Anthony Ostlund"), for the past 21 years, initially as an employee, then as a shareholder and most recently as CEO.

"After two decades of working extremely hard, my name was recently added to the firm name, and I was appointed as the CEO," she said reflecting on her career to date. "Being named the CEO of Anthony Ostlund is consistent with my firm's values of rewarding hard work and success and providing equal opportunity for all. I welcomed the new challenge subject only to making sure that I would be able to continue my robust business litigation practice."

Janel is driven by her clients and her deep desire to help them resolve their problems and improve their lives. She finds some level of balance outside of work spending as much time as possible with her two children ages 18 and 16, being active doing anything adventurous and trying to maintain a healthy lifestyle.



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Shareholder & CEO

**Anthony Ostlund Louwagie
Dressen & Boylan P.A.**



ANTHONY OSTLUND LOUWAGIE • DRESSEN • BOYLAN

About Janel's firm: Anthony Ostlund Louwagie Dressen & Boylan P.A.

Anthony Ostlund is a boutique business litigation firm focused exclusively on dispute resolution and trials. The firm's attorneys manage crises for their business clients; solve problems; and deliver results. In Janel's admittedly biased opinion, there is not another group of such skilled, dedicated, driven, and successful business trial lawyers working together in the same law firm in the Mid-West.

"Our successes for our clients are substantial and impressive under any standard, and it is how we measure ourselves as a law firm," she says. "If a business has a dispute that needs to be resolved, we are the firm to call. Since our entire focus is business litigation, our clients can be assured that our team of about 20 lawyers has the skills and expertise needed to resolve the most complex and challenging business disputes."

In fact, Janel believes the more complex and challenging, the better. And the firm's success shows. 75 percent of the firm's attorneys have received recognition as Minnesota



Super Lawyers and Rising Stars, and several of them have received recognition as Attorneys of the Year and Best Lawyers. U.S. News has also designated the firm a Best Law Firm. Anthony Ostlund's team of attorneys have shaped Minnesota law on shareholder rights, disputes involving closely-held businesses, and fiduciary duty litigation. In addition, the firm's attorneys successfully manage, pursue, and defend complex business disputes in the areas of trusts, employment, intellectual property, securities, fraud, and real estate, among many other areas of business disputes.

Responsibilities as the CEO

Being the CEO of a legal practice is not unlike being the

CEO of a small business of professionals. Janel touches the majority of the aspects of running the business including general operation issues, compensation and benefit issues, resources, hiring, retention, policies and procedures, education and training, marketing, and business development. Co-workers and business partners come to Janel to "bounce" ideas around and seek her counsel. Along with her partners on the firm's executive committee, Janel also works on plans for the firm's future.

"As the CEO of Anthony Ostlund, it is important to me to be supportive of our legal community, our judges and lawyers, and those in the community in need," she says. "While this position requires me to work long hours, I am willing to do this work because I find that obtaining successful results for my clients and making a positive impact in our community extremely rewarding."

There is No Substitute for Hard Work

Janel has worked extremely hard her entire adult life, including holding multiple jobs from the time she was in high school. Work ethic has a very high spot on Janel's list.

"It is important to me that my clients get what they pay for," she says. "To me, that means being prepared, understanding their objectives, and being their advocate. Just as there is no substitute for hard work, there is no substitute for being prepared and compassionate."

Janel also values honesty from her clients and from her colleagues and partners. She believes that *problems are best solved with honesty leading the way.*

Keys to Building a Great Team

According to Janel, a team of professionals is much more satisfied when they can work in an environment that enables them to use their best skills—free from micromanagement and together in the same place.

"One of the most difficult challenges of the pandemic was being away from my colleagues and partners," she shared. "We flourish when we are together to collaborate, brainstorm, and bring energy and passion to each other and to our practices. There is no substitute."

Janel believes that "trusting your colleagues and clearly communicating expectations is the key to a successful team. We thrive and succeed at Anthony Ostlund by setting high expectations and holding each other accountable."

Advice for New Lawyers

"While there are many different types of opportunities in the legal market, a successful career is not a given. You must work for it. Determine what you enjoy doing the most and then go for it. Recognize that you can't and shouldn't go it alone. Find a good mentor or mentors who have the time to work with you, be a sponge, and learn everything you can about your chosen area of law. Get out of your comfort zone every single day, meet people in your desired area of expertise, and learn to be more prepared than any other person in the room. Finally, get involved in your community and have gratitude for the opportunities afforded to you." 

