

## Jessica Joy Richards

**Senior Associate**

**Columbus**

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### About Jessica

Jessica Richards is in the Global Corporate Practice Group, where she leverages her broad experience in general corporate matters to develop tailored, effective strategies designed to help clients find creative solutions and achieve their goals. She focuses on a variety of corporate transactional and commercial matters, including mergers and acquisitions, joint ventures, reorganizations, corporate compliance, corporate governance and assists companies with respect to confidential annual director evaluations. Jessica specializes in advising clients on Employee Stock Ownership Plan (ESOP) transactions. Jessica co-leads the ESOP Practice, where she advises business owners, companies, sellers and trustees on all aspects of ESOP implementation, transactions and compliance, including corporate restructuring in preparation for the ESOP transaction. With experience in M&A and corporate governance, she regularly counsels clients on structuring ESOP transactions that meet both strategic and regulatory objectives. Her work spans the full lifecycle of ESOPs – from initial planning through post-closing compliance and corporate governance. Known for her practical, business-minded approach, Jessica partners with business owners and management teams to align strategies with long-term business goals and succession planning, including expansion and growth strategies.

In addition, Jessica advises on a variety of US and cross-border commercial matters, including all aspects of distribution and supply chain arrangements, goods and services agreements, master service agreements (MSAs), Software-as-a-Service (SaaS) and hosting agreements, as well as other unique commercial arrangements. She represents clients in both public and privately held companies across a wide range of industries, including construction, manufacturing, professional services, healthcare, accommodation and food services, real estate, waste management, media and advertising, energy and technology.

Jessica draws on her in-house experience at a national non-profit healthcare company—where she advised on strategic initiatives and innovative transactions—to deliver strategic and client-focused legal solutions. Her time in-house sharpened her ability to anticipate client needs and provide thoughtful, efficient counsel grounded in real-world operations.

Jessica founded and currently leads a cross-practice transactions group in the firm's Columbus office, which focuses on sharing strategies and support for navigating complex dynamics in transactional work. She also serves as a board member for the Ohio Women's Bar Association, is on the Women in Transactions Committee of the Columbus Association for Corporate Growth and is a member of the ESOP Association as well as the Willis Society at Ohio Northern University.

## Experience

- Advising on a corporate reorganization for a management consulting firm followed by a redemption and sale to an ESOP.
- Advising on a construction company's corporate reorganization and spinoff, followed by a 100% sale to an ESOP.
- Representing a global provider of outsourced communication services in its acquisition of all of the outstanding equity of an answering and voicemail services provider and its subsidiary.
- Advising a leading provider of water management solutions on an internal corporate reorganization, which included the consolidation of multiple subsidiaries.
- Representing domestic and international sellers in various commercial agreements, including supply and distribution agreements/terms of sale.
- Representing a large engineering and manufacturing business in various commercial transactions, including manufacturing supply agreements and engineering services agreements at both the customer and supplier levels.
- Representing a construction company in its redemption and stock sale into a 100% owned ESOP in the amount of US\$40 million.
- Representing a construction and electrical company in its redemption and stock sale into a 100% owned ESOP for over US\$100 million.
- Representing an ESOP trustee in connection with its purchase of a minority interest in a food services company.
- Representing various trustees of ESOPs in connection with ESOP transactions.
- Representing various business owners and companies in connection with their ESOP transactions.
- Advising a publicly traded manufacturing company with a market cap of approximately US\$1 billion in various M&A and commercial transactions, including Securities Exchange Commission (SEC) compliance matters.
- Representing a regional solid waste management company in multiple M&A transactions ranging from US\$10 million to US\$130 million and providing ongoing counsel with respect to commercial contracts and corporate governance.
- Representing various technology companies in SaaS and other licensing and sales-based agreements, commercial matters and M&A transactions.
- Representing various nonprofits in connection with strategic initiatives benefiting the community and local providers.
- Drafting website and mobile application terms of use, privacy policies and other disclosure policies in accordance with evolving privacy disclosure legislation.
- Serving as in-house counsel managing novel strategic joint ventures and other transactions.

## Credentials

### Education

- Ohio Northern University, J.D., with high distinction, articles research editor, *Ohio Northern University Law Review*, 2013

- Ohio Northern University, B.A., with high distinction, 2009

## Admissions

- Ohio, 2013

## Memberships & Affiliations

- Board Member, Ohio Women's Bar Association
- Member, Women in Transactions Committee of the Columbus Association for Corporate Growth
- Member, The ESOP Association
- Member, Willis Society at Ohio Northern University

## Expertise

### Services

- Corporate
- Tax Strategy & Benefits

## About our firm

One of the world's strongest integrated law firms, providing insight at the point where law, business and government meet. We deliver commercially focused business solutions by combining our legal, lobbying and political capabilities and invaluable connections on the ground to a diverse mix of clients, from long-established leading corporations to emerging businesses, startup visionaries and sovereign nations. More than 1,500 lawyers in over 40 offices across four continents provide unrivaled access to expertise.