

Janneth Lanini

Senior Counsel

Reynolds Consumer Products

In current position for: Approx. 2 years

Years in-house: Approx. 2 years

Law School: University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign

Undergrad: Loyola University Chicago (BA in Political Science & International Studies)

An overview of my role is:

I primarily support the company's Procurement, Real Estate, Supply Chain/Logistics, and International Business – LATAM Region regarding all aspects of commercial transactions, including the negotiation of complex commercial agreements, Real Estate Leases, SaaS Agreements, Distribution Agreements. I serve as a trusted advisor and counsel to business units on compliance with applicable law, regulations and policies to drive company brand and support strategic business initiatives.

I wanted to work in-house because:

Prior to joining Reynolds, I worked in legal departments for government and non-profit agencies, including the Chicago Transit Authority (CTA), as well as a law firm, focused on regulatory compliance and ethics. While at the CTA, I discovered that I truly enjoyed working for a company, not only to help them comply with laws and regulations, but to also be involved in the business side helping the company navigate legal issues. After that, I sought in-house roles that would allow me to have the freedom to think creatively about resolving legal issues.

The best thing about my current job is:

Being part of the legal team gives me the opportunity to make an impact at all levels of the organization. Seeing the whole life cycle of a transaction allows me to develop a more nuanced understanding of the needs of the stakeholders.

The most challenging thing about my current job is:

Probably the same as a lot of in-house lawyers – assessing risk and making decisions with limited information. With more experience I've learned that I'll likely never have all of the information, but I've learned to make the best decision based on the information available at the time.

My favorite pro bono or volunteer activity is:

Promoting diversity in the legal profession through a variety of leadership roles within bar associations. Most recently, I serve as Secretary for the Hispanic National Bar Association's Corporate Counsel Division and as Immediate-Past President for HLAI, serving the Hispanic Lawyers of Illinois. It's important for me to contribute to the pipeline of diverse attorneys and create a path for future generations of Latinx lawyers to practice in-house.

I achieve work/life balance by:

Unless there is a big deadline or an important project, I unplug for the weekend and enjoy time with family or friends. I started my in-house role during the COVID-19 pandemic and while it created a unique opportunity to find different ways to make connections, it also blurred the lines between home and work. I try to separate my office space within my home and have a clear line between the two spaces in order to achieve balance.

Advice I would give to new in-house lawyers:

Learn the business. As an in-house lawyer the connection to the business is very important. You have to understand the company's business model, strategic vision, trends, and how your role and the legal department may be expected to support business goals.

What I like most about ACC's Chicago Chapter:

The many CLE opportunities and events to keep members engaged. I also love that it provides internship opportunities to law students.

Most valuable life lesson that I still apply:

There's always opportunity in failure. Believing that failure is not a permanent experience, but that it provides an opportunity to learn and grow.

If I were not practicing law, I would probably be:

a winemaker; own a vineyard in France or Italy (not that I have any skills for that).

My favorite vacation spot:

Basque Country – San Sebastian in Spain and Biarritz in France.

I'm currently binge watching:

The Lincoln Lawyer and Stranger Things.

People may be surprised to learn that:

I love Formula 1 racing, I watch every weekend and have attended several races. What I love about F1 is that it is both an individual and team sport at the same time. The sport also has an unbelievable commitment to continuous improvement and can offer valuable lessons on how to innovate and lead.