

# Dainius Dumbrys

## Real Estate Lawyer Enjoys Fulfilling Clients' Dreams

by Dan Farnham

No matter how big or small the real estate deal is, attorney Dainius R. Dumbrys gives his utmost attention to every client he works with.

"I don't treat the minuscule deal any different than I do the \$100 million deal," he says. "I try to remember that whatever I'm working on for that person at that time is likely the most important thing going on in their life."

Dumbrys, 39, has worked for the law firm of **Boodell & Domanskis, LLC** for 13 years, handling general transactional matters, including residential and commercial real estate, estate planning and probate, lending law and general business law.

He is known among colleagues and clients for his wealth of knowledge in real estate law and his ability to communicate ideas in a way that is easy to understand.

Tim Jasper, an attorney with the family law firm Davis Friedman, LLP, first met Dumbrys while both were undergraduates at the University of Iowa and has since worked with him on divorce cases that involved small businesses. Jasper says Dumbrys has the right temperament to be an attorney and the ability to find practical solutions to complex real estate deals.

"He's actually helped me close on real estate deals personally," he says. "He helped find me practical alternatives that helped everyone win."

Real estate agent Jennifer Piet says Dumbrys is her go-to referral on deals because of his communication skills.

"Nothing ever falls through the cracks," she says. "Even my clients, whenever I refer them to him, are always impressed with the service."

Donna Navickas first worked with Dumbrys as a real estate investor in 2008 and is now a real estate agent who refers clients to him.

"Dainius was great in explaining everything and all the steps in the process," she says. "I felt comfortable and secure in the whole process. Every client I referred to him has given me that feedback as well."



### Living the American Dream

Dumbrys understands the needs of first-time property owners because of his experience growing up in a community of Lithuanian immigrants on Chicago's South Side. He feels a common bond with immigrant families, no matter where they are from.

"They're living the American dream," he says. "You've (seen) that happen yourself with your own family, and now you get to help those people do that. That

also gives you a different understanding in terms of respect for people and what they're worried about and what they need from you."

Dumbrys decided by his sophomore year in college that he wanted to become an attorney, though he also considered becoming a physician. His maternal grandparents were medical professionals who came to the United States from Lithuania after World War II, and some family and friends expected that Dumbrys

would follow in their footsteps.

“I liked that idea,” he says. “I still am intrigued by it, in terms of medicine and what goes on, but I’m sure I made the right choice being an attorney and not a physician.”

Dumbrys says he enjoys being an attorney because he has always liked helping people and giving advice.

“It seemed like a natural sort of thing to become an attorney because it was a way in which you could help people do what they want,” he says. “I help you create a condo development. I help you buy a night club or a business. I help you do your estate planning. There’s a sense of fulfillment that comes with that.”

Dumbrys is involved with the Lithuanian community through the Lithuanian Scout Association and other cultural organizations. He regularly attends events with his wife and two young children.

“It’s been a boon in terms of business because there is a group of people I know who can come to me for answers, and you already have a bond,” he says. “There’s a different level of trust because someone knows you from Boy Scouts or Saturday school.”

## Family Friendship Leads to Career

Dumbrys received his law degree in 2002 from the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign. While there, he also worked for two years as a law clerk for the law firm of Tepper and Gwinn in Urbana, which later became Tepper, Mann and German after attorney John Gwinn died.

When Dumbrys returned home to Chicago, he received his next career opportunity from family friend and veteran attorney Al Domanskis. Dumbrys’ mother and Domanskis were friends growing up, and Domanskis would follow up with her about how her son was doing in his law career.

“He reached out to me when I came back from school, asking if I had found a job yet,” Dumbrys says. “He said, ‘I’m opening this new firm with Tom Boodell, and you can come help out and we’ll see how it goes.’”

After passing his bar exam, Dumbrys started working as an attorney at the firm in the spring of 2003. Because it was around the time of the real estate boom, there was plenty of work to do in that area.

“As the firm grew and the business grew, I made myself indispensable as much as possible,” he says.

Domanskis says Dumbrys’ wealth of

experience with the firm has helped him grow and perform as an excellent attorney.

“He’s conscientious and pragmatic,” Domanskis says. “He gets done what needs to be done for the client.”

Dumbrys says Domanskis and Boodell have been excellent mentors for him.

“It’s been great having those two men at the office with me every day because they’re examples and because they taught me the right way to work,” he says.

## Voice of Reason

While at Boodell & Domanskis, Dumbrys has handled a variety of commercial and residential real estate deals. He focuses heavily on legal matters that concern the restaurant and hospitality industry. He has helped negotiate deals on several restaurants, such as the Pearl Tavern in the Loop and Bar Marta in Humboldt Park.

Dumbrys says he gets to work with a great mix of savvy businesspeople and artists who are adept at coming up with restaurant concepts.

“It’s really fun when you have people creating new (restaurants),” he says. “You

“He has a very good analytical mind, and I respect his opinion,” he says. “When I’m angry about something, he’s the voice of reason.”

Dumbrys says it can be hard to reach a certain comfort level where an attorney can offer a frank opinion without offending a client. But he and Kasperas were able to reach that level quickly.

“I’ve helped him be able to make decisions on properties to purchase, areas to look at, and been able to be very frank and say, ‘Look, I know your business. I know what it is that you’re looking for. I know what kind of return you’re looking for. I know what you as a landlord are looking for, and I think this property from the information that has been given does not suit you,’” he says.

Kasperas has also turned to Dumbrys for legal aid in personal matters. When Kasperas’ father-in-law was dying of cancer, Kasperas discovered his father-in-law did not have a last will and testament. He contacted Dumbrys, who stopped what he was working on to draw up the will and come to the nursing home to get the document signed and notarized.

“I don’t know who else would have done that for us,” Kasperas says.

## Happy Person

Dumbrys particularly enjoys the personal connections he makes with clients. “I care about what the client needs,” he says. “I understand them from the largest deal to the most minuscule deal.”

One of the favorite deals he closed was when he was working with a Lithuanian immigrant who had saved enough money through jobs in physical labor to purchase a condominium. After the closing, he was walking to his car when the man asked him to wait. The man opened the trunk of his car. Inside was a cooler with a vodka bottle on ice. The two did shots of vodka in the parking lot to celebrate.

“It’s happy,” he says. “I try to be a happy person as much as I can. That was no giant deal.”

Dumbrys says he wants to be thought of as the best real estate attorney in Chicago, though he admits it is a lofty goal.

“I think there are many people better who will get there before me because I still have a lot to do,” he says. “But that’s what I want. I don’t need to be the highest earner. I want to be happy, and I want every client to be happy when they’re done dealing with me.” ■

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get to go to the grand opening party. You get to go there and see them and see how it’s going. It’s not the same as being an owner, but you can have a little bit of pride in saying ‘I helped this person achieve this dream.’”

Dumbrys also works with residential real estate investors, such as Len Kasperas of Fieldstone Custom Homes. Kasperas was transitioning from a career in the manufacturing industry to running his own property management business when he started working with Dumbrys.

“He helped me through a lot of these purchase decisions,” he says. “He would tell me the risk versus the rewards. He helped me organizing the business into a series of LLCs.”

Kasperas now owns several condominiums in the neighborhoods around the University of Chicago. He says he trusts Dumbrys as his attorney because he is grounded and mature for someone his age.