



Q & A with Drew Beres

Co-Founder & Managing Partner, Croke Fairchild Duarte & Beres



Drew Beres co-founded Croke Fairchild Duarte & Beres to create a law firm focused on what matters most — the client. Nearly three years and many successful clients later, CFDB has grown into a 57-lawyer firm performing at the top of its game and serving innovative clients across a variety of industries. And with commitment to diversity and inclusion front and center in its recent certification as a Women-Owned Business Enterprise, CFDB is packed with talent and poised to thrive in the future of law.

CRAIN'S: Why start your own firm?

BERES: My dad dropped out of law school at Northwestern University and eventually started his own ad agency. When I was young, he would take me to the office. So, I always had that drive to build something with others that we could call our own and that would enable us to practice law in a very specific way that was driven by forging strong partnerships with clients. Our firm is relationship driven, not transactional. We forge exceptionally close relationships with our clients. They view us as part of their internal team and consult with us on a wide variety of issues and opportunities.

CRAIN'S: What's your greatest accomplishment?

BERES: My dad died in 2006 and had regretted not finishing law school. This was a huge motivating factor for me. So, when I graduated from Northwestern's law school, I had both of our names put on my diploma. It means a lot to me and it would have meant a lot to him. I'm also really proud that our firm has been able to attract a very high caliber of talented people.

CRAIN'S: What's your biggest challenge?

BERES: Finding balance. We strive to build in the processes and administrative support so everyone can do their jobs while maintaining our culture of entrepreneurship and creativity.

CRAIN'S: Any advice for young professionals?

BERES: Lyndon Johnson is a big hero of mine. He had a saying about campaigning, "If you do *everything*, you'll win." You want to be able to look

back and know you did everything you could to succeed. You have to be solely focused on the task at hand.

CRAIN'S: What's next?

BERES: We will continue to build this firm to realize its potential. We have lofty goals. It takes total dedication and every ounce of energy to create what we're building here and to perform at the highest levels. We will continue to be relentless.

CRAIN'S: How would you describe your leadership style?

BERES: I am very fortunate to be leading our firm along with three other partners who are each very close personal friends of mine. There is a level of trust that is truly remarkable and it allows us to take risks that we otherwise may not be able to. Our style is exceptionally collaborative – we make major decisions as a group and are supportive of one another. That approach certainly leads to lively debates – we welcome that – but we strive to get to the right result. Our style is also fully transparent in seeking feedback from the entire firm. Our review process allows anyone at Croke Fairchild to provide an evaluation for anyone else, totally devoid of hierarchy. I don't think many law firms take that approach.

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