

Denise Stapleton

Morristown attorney Denise Stapleton knew from the time she was a child that she wanted to follow in her father's footsteps and pursue a career in law.

"I used to come into the office with my dad on Saturday mornings and listen while he talked to people. I just loved it and I knew that was what I really wanted to do," Stapleton said.

Now, as a successful lawyer, Stapleton finds pleasure in helping her clients overcome the hardships they face.

"I am very blessed in that I get to help people who need help. At the end of the day, that is the most rewarding thing. It's a real blessing to be a part of people's lives and to share in their pain, in their joy," she said.

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ATTORNEY

STORY BY BRITTANY HOLBERT PHOTO BY CHUCK HALE

Stapleton

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Stapleton has been working for her family firm, Terry Terry and Stapleton, for 28 years in a variety of capacities.

"I started out as an errand girl when I was around 16 and then advanced to paralegal. I started managing the office when I was 22," she said.

While managing her father's office, Stapleton would commute back and forth to the Nashville School of Law while working on getting her law degree.

Stapleton says it was a struggle to manage both work and school, but it was well worth the reward to be in a career she enjoys while surrounded by people she loves.

"I started working here 1982, and then around 1991 my brother Chuck came to work here. Then my other brother Brack came. It's been nice to be able to work with two brothers and my dad," Stapleton said.

Being a female in the law profession has presented minimal challenges for Stapleton, but she says she has many mentors to thank for that.

"Female attorneys weren't as prevalent as they are now when I started practicing but the attorneys in the East Tennessee area were so kind to me. I was mentored in a very positive way from my dad and others.

"I was never treated as if I weren't good enough or that there was a stigma because I was a woman," she said.

Stapleton enjoys being an active member of the community.

She was the second female Morristown Area Chamber of Commerce chair in 2006, and has served on numerous boards including Girls, Inc.; HC Excel; New Hope Discovery Clinic; and Discovery Tennessee.

She resides in Whitesburg with her husband, Mark, who is an attorney in Rogersville, and her 15-year-old son Gabe.

Love

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Love, whose family was originally from Hancock County moved to Michigan when she was eight, where she stayed for 41 years and raised two children.

Love's son remained in Michigan while her daughter resides in Florida with her only grandchild.

"This is home and once my kids were grown I thought, I want to go home. I surprised myself after living in Michigan for 41 years," she said.

Once moving back to Tennessee, Love met her husband Gary who she recently married on September 4.

"He is very supportive with whatever I want to do," Love said. "He did say once, I really do worry about you, but that is what you want to do. You have to have someone behind you supporting you."

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