

Celebrating Women's History Month

March 2018

SGR 125th
Anniversary
SMITH, GAMBRELL & RUSSELL, LLP

Anne Edwards Litigation, Partner

Inspired by
Eleanor Roosevelt

I find inspiration from the words of Eleanor Roosevelt who said "The future belongs to those who believe in the beauty of their dreams." From her early days as first lady until her death in 1962, Eleanor believed civil rights to be the real litmus test for American democracy. After the death of her husband, she was freed from the constraints the White House tried to impose on her activities and joined the NAACP Board of Directors. She pressured the Truman administration to recommend a permanent Fair Employment Practices Commission to lobby against the poll tax and to propose low income federally financed housing. She later worked with Martin Luther King, Jr. and Rosa Parks to raise money for the Montgomery Bus Boycott. At the 1956 Democratic National Convention, she chaired the platform hearings on civil rights and after moderating a heated debate between those opposed to the Brown decision and civil rights activists she drafted a plank, which condemned the use of force and declared the Supreme Court the nation's legal arbiter. Eleanor mentioned the Brown decision in every speech she gave for Adlai Stevenson, endorsed the Powell Amendment to bar federal funds from construction of segregated schools, and chided those Americans who did not see the inherent hypocrisy of critiquing communism and supporting segregation. She opposed John Kennedy's nomination as much for his non-existent support of civil rights as she did for his silence on McCarthy.

Why did you choose your practice area?

It was a progression. When I first



graduated from college I wanted to go into social work, which ultimately led to a job as a parole and probation officer and then to a decision to go to law school. My original practice area was in bankruptcies and financial restructuring. When the economy improved, and I found I was doing mostly litigation in the financial services and real property areas, I found the problem solving more intriguing and stayed with it.

What are three things you wish you could tell every woman you know entering the workforce right now?

This probably sounds really cliché but I would probably tell them:

- (1) Don't sweat the small stuff.
- (2) Don't beat yourself up over the mistakes or losses from an earlier day.
- (3) Nothing comes easy. If you want something, you have to work for it. Practice makes perfect.

Dana Mark Trust & Estates, Partner

Inspired by
Rosa Parks

A woman in history that inspired me is Rosa Parks. I admire her strength and courage to stand up (or more appropriately not stand up) for what was right. She put herself out there, she took action. I hardly see myself as an activist but on a significantly smaller scale I would hope that my actions – both personally and professionally - have made (and will continue to make) a positive difference. As a lawyer, I have been able to use my skill set to provide legal services to those who would not otherwise be able to afford a lawyer, assisting individuals on a one-on-one basis, as well as charitable organizations - helping a charity get off the ground and from there it has the outreach to help so many others.



Did you have a mentor? If so, how did they encourage you in your career?

I did have a mentor and he (yes it was a man) recognized my abilities and guided me in my career. I started as a paralegal. He encouraged me to go to law school and then get my LL.M. which I did while I was working with him and he was supportive of my work/school schedule. Besides work and school, he also helped me to think about the bigger picture - importantly, that there was more to life than work - and not only focus on an immediate reaction or response, so that when a less than ideal situation presents itself he taught me to step back, examine the situation, think through the next step, and formulate a plan of action. I found this to be somewhat of a life lesson, both with work as well as being mindful of others.

Do you believe a woman can have both a meaningful professional career and a fulfilling personal life?

Yes, you can have both a meaningful career and a fulfilling personal life. I believe there is a balance but that the balance fluctuates. The priorities at a given time will change and part of having both a career and a home life is recognizing when you need to make an adjustment, and also recognizing that the priorities could vary from day to day. Being flexible and resilient come in handy. A sense of humor doesn't hurt as well as realizing that life is what happens while you are busy making plans. Importantly you need to make time for yourself – that's not being selfish, it's self preservation.



The Women of Smith, Gambrell & Russell

Marsha Ajhar
Intellectual Property
Gadget Girl

Elizabeth Blakely
Corporate
Book Reader

Lisa Carrasco
Employee Benefits
Mother of Twin Girls

Melissa Dearing
Litigation
Survivor

Marcia Ernst
Litigation
Lake Life Lover

Sasha Greenberg
Litigation
Beyoncé's Inspiration

Susie Kim
Immigration
Intrepid Wayfarer

Jennifer Lawson
Labor & Employment
Newlywed & Yogi

Emily McConnell
Corporate
Former Spelling Bee
Champ

Dexterrie Ramirez
Real Estate
Wanna-be
Party Planner

Terry Schwartz
Corporate
Low Country Girl

Robin Silberzweig
Real Estate
MacGyver-like
Problem Solver

Darlene Tzou
Tax
Climbing Dragon Boater

Carrie Anderer
Litigation
Political Junkie

Elizabeth Borland
Intellectual Property
Chorister

Jasmine Chean
Litigation
Avid Golfer

Danila Duo
Corporate
Hit-or-miss Italian Chef

Shani Smith Fisher
Aviation
Responsible &
Dependable

Nicole Haff
Intellectual Property
Surfer Girl

Darlene Klinsky
Intellectual Property
Animal Lover &
Faithful Friend

Kristen Lewis
Tax
Newlywed

Aasia Mustakeem
Real Estate
Wanna-be Salsaer

Dana Richens
Litigation
Award Winning
Grillmaster

Leah Ward Sears
Litigation
Trials and Appeals/
Fashionista

Ariane Smith
Litigation
Arts Enthusiast

Laura Wartner
Private Client Services
Aspiring Chef

Laura M. Andrew
Healthcare
Green Thumb

Kristen Bracken
Litigation
Furniture Refinisher

Nicole Chong
Corporate
Lifelong Spanish Language
Student

Sharon Duvall
Real Estate
Boating Beauty

Chloe Furfine
Litigation
Avid Shutterbug

Akiyo Hewett
Corporate
Surfer Girl

Simone Kraus
International
Multilingualist

Dana Mark
Private Client Services
Outer Space Enthusiast

Erin Peterson
Corporate
Competitive
Tennis Player

Kate Rowe
Intellectual Property
Entertainment
Fly Fisher

Julie Sebastian
Corporate
Sports Nut

Lisa Smith
Real Estate
Part-time Pianist

Svetlana Zagorina
Tax
Artist at Heart

Emma Barry
Tax
One Proud Mama

Danielle Burnette
Litigation
Lover of Art & Fashion

Cassandra Daum
Intellectual Property
Future World Traveler

Anne Edwards
Litigation
Happy & Gregarious

Alyson Graham
Corporate
Handywoman
Extraordinaire

Nicole Kalkines
Litigation
Brunch Enthusiast

Holly Lance
Intellectual Property
Dedicated Yogi

Toysha Massey
Litigation
Seafood Lover

Anne Pitter
Corporate/Real Estate
Aspiring
Photojournalist

Vickie Rusek
Litigation
Road Tripper

Laleh Sharifi
Immigration
Avid Hiker

Dominique Tauzin
Tax
Urban Gardner

Kathryn Zickert
Zoning
Flash Mob Dancer

SGR's Women's Initiative affinity group is committed to the advancement of professional women. SGR recognizes the importance of retaining women in the workplace, fostering stronger relationships, and providing added value to its business and social communities. For the firm's women attorneys, the Women's

Initiative focuses on mentoring and providing resources to hone the skills necessary for career advancement. For the firm's women clients, contacts, and friends, it aims to create opportunities to network and programs to educate about important legal and social issues.