

# Celebrating Women's History Month

March 2018

**SGR** 125<sup>th</sup>  
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.