



A PROFILE IN BALANCE

By James G. McGiffin, Jr., Esquire

Kara Swasey

It's all Fun on the Kara Swasey Team

If I aspire to be the best lawyer I can be, I must first try to be the best person I can be. I am fortunate to know many lawyers who have succeeded in their work, in part, because they are excellent people. This column in The Bar Journal will feature an article on one such lawyer. Each featured lawyer will exemplify the art of balance in life. I have learned much from these people. Perhaps readers will also benefit.

- Jim McGiffin

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Kara Swasey is fun. It is evident in her smile and her demeanor. Though she can be serious, fun is a priority in her life. This cannot be said of enough Delaware lawyers.

A Buffalo native and daughter of a college professor, Kara chose to attend the University of Delaware because it was available to her through a tuition exchange program. Business was her course of study. Her career plan was to lead a major corporation some day. Pretty serious stuff. And yet, she earned her science requirement credit by studying “chocolate” as a freshman. Fun.

Kara chose Villanova for her next academic endeavor. She enrolled in and completed the joint JD/MBA program in three years. Kara described the program this way: attend law school during the day and business school in the evening. That is very serious. After graduation she went with Bayard, P.A. to work in corporate litigation. To her surprise, she found that the Chancery Court litigation did not light her fire. She thought she should explore another practice area offered by the firm, so she started accepting family law appointments from Bayard director Curtis Bounds, a renowned family law attorney. She was happy to discover that a family law practice requires a great deal of client contact and courtroom time, in contrast to the corporate work that involved little of either. For Kara, family law was just more fun.

As she transitioned her practice from corporate work to family work, Kara took a number of steps to acquaint



herself with the new environment. She joined a group of family law attorneys who meet regularly for lunch. She joined DSBA’s Family Law Section. Family law attorneys are fun. She volunteered for the Attorney for the Day program run by Delaware Volunteer Legal Services, handling Protection from Abuse cases for abuse victims on Fridays. She volunteered with the Domestic Violence Advocacy Program. She joined the Melson-Arsht American Inn of Court. She volunteered with the Office of the Child Advocate. All the while she enjoyed the mentorship of Curtis Bounds and the support of Bayard, where she is now a director, herself.

Kara really has the most fun with her family. Her husband, Dan, actually has fun for a living. He is a physical education teacher and soccer coach at St. Mark’s High School. Kara tells a revealing story about arriving home at 1:00 a.m., bleary-eyed after a night of “corporate litigation” and inquiring of Dan about his day. “It was great!” He explained, “We did the ping-pong unit today.” And these folks love sports. Kara is particularly proud of the fact that Dan took her to a baseball game for her birthday in 2008 and that the Phillies won the World Series in that very game. That must have been great fun.

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Kara and Dan have two sons, Tom and Greg. Tom is six years old, and he is a sports prodigy. Not only does he play many sports well (he hits the ball over the fence from the tee), but he is also an amazingly knowledgeable fan. For example, he picked the winners in the 2015 NCAA Men’s Basketball Tournament (when he was five). Greg, while also athletic (and faster than Tom, apparently), is the family comedian. And, these sports fans have lots of fun. They attend Flyers, Phillies, and University of Delaware games as a family. They also attend St. Marks games to cheer on Dad and the team. Kara admits that son Greg is actually named for a St. Marks soccer star who scored three goals in the state championship final (though he was credited for only two — he was robbed of the third by the ref).

Kara Swasey brings much to all that she does. She is smart and hard-working. She is respected and knowledgeable. But, where Kara is unique is in the degree of another trait she brings to all she does: mirth. And, everyone who has contact with her is better for it. ☺

James G. McGiffin, Jr. is a Senior Staff Attorney with Community Legal Aid Society, Inc. and a former President of the Delaware State Bar Association. He can be reached at jmcgiffin@declasi.org.

Delaware’s **SMALL FIRMS and SOLO PRACTITIONERS CONFERENCE:** *A Retreat for the Practitioner*

04 | 01 | 16 Atlantic Sands Hotel & Conference Center, Rehoboth Beach, DE



On April 1, 2016 over 50 attendees gathered at the Atlantic Sands Hotel & Conference Center in Rehoboth Beach, DE to attend the **Small Firms and Solo Practitioners Conference: A Retreat for the Practitioner**, sponsored by Small Firms and Solo Practitioners Section of the Delaware State Bar Association and the Delaware Lawyers Assistance Program. Attendees from all over the state came out for the premiere event. Some even opted to take the free shuttle from Wilmington provided by DSBIS.



The seminar included relevant topics that directly affect small firms and solo practitioners, including social media and technology; marketing ethics; owning and operating a small firm or solo practice; pro bono service; investment planning; disciplinary complaints and malpractice, as well as views from the Bench. A sponsored lunch with a presentation was provided by Ginger Ward from UBS Wealth Management. The event also included a vendor hall with exhibitors: Career Planning Services; Caron Treatment Centers; Fastcase, Inc.; and LawPay. In addition, the morning break was sponsored by Just Legal, Inc. and the afternoon break was sponsored by Mirmont Treatment Center.



The day concluded with social events provided by both the DSBA, sponsored by DSBIS, and the Small Firms and Solo Practitioners Section. The event was deemed so successful that 2017 Conference plans have already begun. ☺

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For information on submitting articles for publication, please contact Rebecca Baird at rbaird@dsba.org.



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James J. Haley, Jr., Esq.
ABOTA Member; Certified Mediator
302-656-7247; JHALEY@FERRARALAW.NET
1716 Wawaset St., Wilmington, DE 19806-2131