

A Winning Combination

From the bench to private practice, Marilea Lewis is effective at resolving family law cases while preserving family relationships.

When it comes to family law, few attorneys know their way around a courtroom like Marilea Lewis. After nearly two decades as an associate judge and family law court judge, she hung up her robe and is using her knowledge to help families in need as a partner at Dallas' Duffee + Eitzen, a full-service family law practice.

Having worn many hats throughout her career, Lewis' true passion comes from helping her family law clients, whether as a litigator, mediator, arbitrator, or expert witness. "My favorite part of family law is the people and having the chance to make an impact on somebody's life," she says.

Establishing trust, attuning to clients' needs, and communicating throughout the process are integral to Lewis' approach. Understanding the fear and anxiety that clients often bring into the family law arena, she goes above and beyond, showing compassion while working towards the best possible outcome.

Family-Oriented Litigation

Her breadth of experience led Lewis to develop a thoughtful approach to family law advocacy. She refers to her litigation style as "family oriented" with the goal of preserving relationships.

"I don't grind the other side into submission; however, I will push as hard as needed," she notes. "I encourage clients to maintain some semblance of a relationship once the process is over." In her view, divorce can be handled in a way that avoids irreparable damage caused by animosity and rushing into heavy litigation. "Winning" a family law case, she says, consists of developing a working co-parenting relationship after divorce, rather than engaging in unnecessary and protracted litigation.

Lewis keeps her clients involved and respects the gravity of assisting them in making major life-changing decisions. She takes the time to explain the process, ensuring clients understand that while matters may not be resolved overnight, she will be there to ease their fears every step of the way.

"I feel so complimented when clients tell me, 'Just talking to you calms me down,'" she says. "That makes it all worthwhile."



A FAMILY AFFAIR

As a child, Lewis was taught the value of helping those less fortunate, a principle she instilled in her own children. She and her husband have twins who are both lawyers, following in their mother's footsteps. Sheridan Lewis is a criminal defense attorney, and T. Hunter Lewis is a partner at Duffee + Eitzen, working in family law alongside his mother. The two routinely collaborate on family law matters—even trying cases together in court. Advocating for people during difficult times has not only been a theme in Lewis' career, but it will also be a long-lasting family legacy.



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