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Emma D. Becker

A Trusted Advisor

Difficult and sensitive conversations are a daily part of Day Pitney Partner Emma Becker's trusts and estates practice. But, she adds, they are necessary.

"People don't like to think about their own death, and that can be a really uncomfortable thing to discuss," Emma says. "But the benefit of estate planning to those they love and leave behind is enormous. Walking people through that process in a way that's productive is extremely gratifying."

Early in her college career, Emma thought medicine was her chosen path because it felt like a direct way to help people. However, upon graduating Amherst College, she decided to pursue a different way of helping people and applied to law school. She felt a legal career had the right combination of intellectual challenge, practical application and the ability to help others. The daughter of a litigator-turned-English-teacher father, Emma knew firsthand that a law degree would provide flexibility and opportunities. In law school, she enjoyed learning about how real property is handled and transferred and the interpersonal dynamics of trusts and estates law.

"Emma is truly a skilled tax and trust professional who is a master of the law," says Stacy Mullaney, president of a trust company, who first came to know Emma professionally, then hired her to handle her personal estate planning. "I see hundreds of tax and estate-planning attorneys in my career, so it speaks for itself that I chose Emma to not only handle my planning but to be my own family's trustee."

Both Stacy and Steve Oliver, a partner at Cerity Partners, describe Emma as having a high emotional quotient, or EQ. Steve adds that Emma is "responsive, thoughtful and a pleasure to work with." He described a complex multiyear matter in which Emma found solutions to problems that had stumped a team of professionals for months. "It was really impressive," he adds.

While Emma enjoys solving problems, she most appreciates the connections she makes to her clients and their families, and she values being a trusted advisor. "From an intellectual perspective, the practice of trusts and estates is really interesting, because it's challenging—you're always learning, and the more you know, the more you can make a difference to people and families in a concrete way," she says.

Emma came to Day Pitney through its merger with Howland Evangelista Kohlenberg LLP, a dedicated trusts and estates boutique handling complex and sophisticated planning, probate and trust matters for high-net-worth individuals and families. It ended up being what Emma calls a "wonderful change," as she appreciates the sense of collegiality, teamwork and camaraderie that extends from her office to her department to the full firm.

Emma enjoys a close relationship with her mentor, Renée A.R. Evangelista. Renée brought her into projects and client relationships early. From her mentorship, Emma has learned how to be exacting and expect excellence while remaining kind and providing thoughtful feedback and advice. These are vital lessons she applies every day to her practice working with colleagues and clients.

In addition to her practice, Emma serves on the Board of Directors for The Common, a literary organization that publishes emerging writers in connection with her alma mater, Amherst College. She also volunteers her time to read books to elementary school children through the Read to a Child program.

Emma now lives on the south coast of Massachusetts with her husband and three children. She is the oldest of three and is very close to her parents and siblings. Being family-oriented herself allows Emma to relate to her clients and their concerns.

TRUSTS AND ESTATES

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