

Honoring the Heroes Among Us - Lisa L. Brody



From the time she began practicing law in St. Petersburg, Lisa Brody has been committed to providing legal services to clients who could not afford to pay an attorney.

Early in life, Lisa Brody recognized that her family was dedicated to community service. Both parents were community activists and involved members in the civil rights movement. Her mother was a nurse and her father worked for a university. Both worked to assure that the needs of people, whether patients or students, were being met. Fortunately for the St. Petersburg Community, Lisa Brody chose to follow her parents' lead.

Lisa had a unique upbringing. She grew up in Pennsylvania and went to high school in Alaska. She attended undergraduate and law school at the University of Oregon. She has lived in St. Petersburg for the past 14 years. Amidst moving around from state to state, one thing remained constant, her dedication to serving others.

At an early age, she became involved in Girl Scouts, serving her local community with her troop. Her dedication to the community and to the troop led her to earn the prestigious Gold Award. In high school, she continued to participate in organizations that emphasized community service, including the Key Club and Student Council. Experiences in law school solidified Lisa's interest in public service work as a career. In addition to being a Derrick Scholar, she participated in the University of Oregon's student public interest law organization.

Upon graduating from law school, she started her career with Gulfcoast Legal Services, Inc. as a staff attorney. Her passion for her work

and leadership skills resulted in a promotion to managing attorney. In this capacity, she not only managed staff attorneys, but also continued to represent low-income clients in court and administrative hearings. During mandatory legal aid reconfiguration in 2003, Lisa began working with Bay Area Legal Services, Inc. as a managing attorney. She continues in this role advocating for the low-income community.

Lisa has become an expert in the area of housing law, specializing in housing issues involving federal subsidies. She is most proud of her work involving the lawsuit, that led to the removal of lead paint in the Jordan Park public housing complex. In 1995, parents at the complex filed suit against the St. Petersburg Housing Authority because they were concerned about their children ingesting the lead paint common in the complex. In 1999, an amended settlement called on the authority to remove the lead paint in a number of buildings in the complex. Lisa states that she reflects on this case each time she passes by the new Jordan Park homes.

Lisa strongly believes that a key part of providing legal services to low-income citizens is to provide legal education. "People will not know that they may have a case, unless they know their rights," she says. Lisa has conducted dozens of community legal education outreach programs to educate the low-income community about their legal rights. These programs have focused not only on housing issues, but elder law, wills and estates, family law and

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other areas. Simultaneously, she has worked to develop partnerships with community groups and social service agencies to increase program awareness.

When she is not serving her clients, Lisa is still serving the community. As a member of the Junior League of St. Petersburg, Inc., she has been an instrumental member of the “Give a Book” committee and served as the League’s parliamentarian. Lisa has also been active in Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, Inc, an organization that emphasizes community service and development. She has served on its legal team, as parliamentarian, as second vice president and as public relations chair.

Lisa believes that “if it takes a village to raise a child, we must build the village.” She has been chairperson of the Soulful Arts Dance Academy Board of Directors since 2007. The Academy provides access to the arts to youth who otherwise would not be able to afford classes. She has served locally as a volunteer with the Girl Scouts since 2002. When Hurricane Katrina descended upon New Orleans, Lisa’s Brownie Troop was one of the first to act. Under her leadership, the troop collected toiletries to send to the victims in Mississippi within two days of the hurricane and later made special cards and friendship necklaces that were sent to Houston for displaced Girl Scouts. Lisa has also served as President of the Bay Point Elementary School Advisory Council from 2007 to 2009.

Lisa is also an active member of

The Florida Bar and St. Petersburg Bar Association. She has been a member of both associations since her admission to The Florida Bar in 1995. She has served as a member of The Florida Bar Standing Pro Bono Committee and the Sixth Judicial Circuit Grievance Committee. She has served as chair of the St. Petersburg Bar Diversity Committee and co-chair of the Public Service Committee. Lisa is also very active in the Fred G. Minnis, Sr. Bar Foundation, serving on the Scholarship & Awards Banquet Committee for the past five years.

Lisa is not resting on her past accomplishments; she is continuing to learn and to serve. This year, she received her Non-Profit Management and Innovations Certificate from the University of Tampa after completing a rigorous program over a number of months. She continues to serve as a mentor and volunteer of the AKA academy and as a board member of the Youth Development Foundation of Pinellas, Inc., having served on both since 2001. Both organizations are structured to create a healthy and productive community with a focus on issues related to health, the arts, education and economics.

Lisa is married to Assistant County Attorney Carl Brody. They have an eleven year-old daughter, Mara, and

an eight year-old son, Clayton. Lisa’s commitment to her family, the legal community and community at large is inspirational. The St. Petersburg Bar Foundation is proud to honor her as a “Hero Among Us”.

Jeannine S. Williams is a member of the Board of Trustees of the St. Petersburg Bar Foundation. She is the immediate past president of the St. Petersburg Bar Association. She is an Assistant City Attorney with the City of St. Petersburg and a member of The Florida Bar City, County and Local Government Law Section Executive Council.

