

Introducing Foster Swift's New President: Anne Seurnyck

Seurnyck's demonstrated leadership emphasizes that people always come first.

GRAND RAPIDS, Mich. — Attorney Anne M. Seurnyck's rise at one of Michigan's largest law firms is filled with success and distinction for her genuine dedication to serving clients.

Born into a family of lawyers and married to a lawyer, a passion for law is in Seurnyck's makeup. A summer associate position opened the door at Foster Swift; the culture and commitment to clients kept her firmly rooted, as she built her practice.

Seurnyck saw an opportunity early on in her career to create a niche practice in library law. At the time, she became one of a handful of attorneys in the state of Michigan with this area of expertise. She has since worked with communities to form 22 new libraries throughout the state, and drafted amendments to the District Library Establishment Act and other state laws.

Seurnyck's acumen and tenacity also give her the skillset to solve complex issues for municipalities and public entities, allowing them to achieve their goals. She conducts training and counsels clients on how to avoid lawsuits over Freedom of Information Act requests and the Open Meetings Act. If you ask her though, she will tell you that she is most proud of her day-to-day work with library clients, assisting them in providing their services to Michigan residents.

It is this dedication to her clients and her depth of experience that make Seurnyck so highly respected by colleagues. Prior to electing her as President this year, the Shareholders at Foster Swift selected Seurnyck for several key leadership positions. As Vice President of Foster Swift's West Michigan office, she led operations for the firm's Grand Rapids location. She also chaired the municipal law practice group and the firm's Recruiting Committee, and has been actively involved in developing and implementing firmwide policies.

While her successes are many, this trajectory toward becoming the first woman president at a large Michigan law firm wasn't fully traditional.

Seurnyck was one of the first lawyers at Foster Swift to utilize the firm's flex program, which supports attorneys who work an approved alternative schedule. As a mother of three, Seurnyck says this opportunity allowed her to build a strong and successful legal practice while also being an involved parent.

During her 12 years with some reduced hours and flexible workdays, Seurnyck navigated a child's health diagnosis, her own cancer treatment, and life transitions that moved her family across the state, making her the only attorney at Foster Swift to spend significant time working in each of the firm's main three offices in Lansing, Southfield, and Grand Rapids.

In her new role as President, Seurnyck wants to make sure this tradition of firmwide support and collaboration continues.

“We see the value in work, not just hours,” said Seurnyck. “The team is so supportive because we all want our clients to be supported. You can have a strong career, create success for your clients, and find balance in life. I think it’s more important now than ever that young associates feel that they have support in place for long-term success.”

While the flex program helped Seurnyck balance parenthood and work, she earned her spot at the helm of Foster Swift’s Executive Committee by working hard, excelling in her legal practice, and always putting people first.

As far as being one of a few women to hold a position like this in Michigan, she says it’s not something she really thinks about. “I’m here because my colleagues recognized my leadership skills,” said Seurnyck, who will use those leadership skills to continue to serve her clients and the firm. “I’m really looking forward to working closely with our attorneys as we collaborate on ways to help our clients develop plans for long-term success.”