



Law Office of Annette M. Cox

Putting Clients' Families and Futures First

By Lynette Carrington

When a couple decides to divorce or they encounter related familial disputes, there are many important and challenging issues a family will face. The process and the issues surrounding child custody can be a more pleasant experience with the right legal representation. Annette Cox of The Law Office of Annette M. Cox is a rare breed of attorney, who balances compassion with advocacy to obtain the fairest resolution possible.

Getting Established in the Legal Field

The nearly-native Annette Cox attended junior high, high school and college in Arizona after moving with her family from Kansas. She brings with her a different kind of a background that had its roots at the Walter Cronkite School of Journalism and Telecommunications at ASU. "I had always wanted to go to law school. That was always my goal. I wasn't sure what particular area of law I wanted to practice in at the time, but I knew I wanted to be a lawyer..." stated Annette Cox of her path leading to family law. She went into broadcasting and worked locally for Channel 15, KNXV-TV as a writer and eventually as news producer. Additionally, she worked for the ABC affiliate, WLNE, in Providence, Rhode Island. Shortly thereafter, she returned to Arizona to attend law school. Her background in news and journalism continues to serve Annette in her legal field. "I think it helps with presentation in court and being able to communicate a succinct but compelling message," she said.

In her earliest days practicing law, Annette worked in the criminal defense and juvenile law arenas, serving as defense counsel and guardian ad litem. She also had the chance to serve as court-appointed counsel on delinquency and dependency



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actions when she held Special Advocacy and Dependency contracts with Pinal County (2005-2007) and also Maricopa County (2006-2009).

A few years ago, Annette created a firm with a friend and fellow attorney, and after two years, her friend accepted a judicial clerkship with the Honorable Lawrence Anderson in the U.S. District Court, District of Arizona. Annette then went solo with her family law practice. In founding her own firm, the transition was not too difficult; just a whirlwind of logistics. The previous experience in her partnership served as a natural transition into her own practice, and she has hit the ground running.

Personal Experiences Give Clients Additional Insight

"I handle a lot of divorces, but I enjoy more of the custody work, such as post-decree modifications" stated Annette. Currently she is also seeing a spike in relocation cases. Custody is one area of law that Annette understands inside and out and brings her own personal insight to better serve her clients. "Being a divorced mom and having gone through some of the emotional conflict

behind the process, I understand what my clients are going through. At the same time, I try to help them to focus on the family as a whole. I tell my potential clients when they come in that even though you and your spouse may be living in two homes, you're still part of one family, at least as your child sees it," she explained. Balancing school, lessons, parties and events for her own three children allows her clients to relate to her not only as a family law attorney, but also as a busy mother. Annette notes that part of her job is to educate her clients about the process and help them stay focused on the best interest of the children.



Hannah Cox – age 10, Hayden Cox – age 6, Hailey Cox – age 8

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One of the things that sets Annette apart from other family law attorneys is her ability to understand each client's unique situation, yet still exhibit the utmost in legal strength when it comes to representing her clients either in litigation or in some cases, settlement. "I'm not going to only tell my clients the good things. I think part of being a good attorney is recognizing potential weaknesses in your case and at the same time, trying to account for them. With my clients, I try to be straightforward with them and give the pros and cons of whatever strategy they are considering taking," said Annette. She recognizes that some attorneys may not be willing to share that level of candor, but she has seen that the strategy allows her clients to maintain some level of control over the resolution of their case. Occasionally, settlement is the answer. "I would probably say it's a 60/40 split between litigation and settlement. There have been several cases where I think 'There's no way this will settle. We're litigating,' and amazingly, it does," stated Annette. In other cases, "the parties' goals are at polar opposite ends, and letting a judge decide is best."

Putting Families First and Looking Toward the Future

Although she is currently practicing as a sole practitioner, Annette is excited that her law clerk recently passed the bar exam. As for her goals for her firm, "I think a boutique firm is ideal. I do want to expand, (but) for me it's more about finding people that are driven in the same way that I am...that we have

similar goals and can function as a team. While starting small, I think my law clerk, Sally Colton, will be a great addition and an asset to my clients," said the attorney.

In addition to divorce cases, some of the other types of cases The Law Office of Annette M. Cox accepts are relocations, guardianships, CPS dependencies, spousal maintenance, prenuptials agreements, legal separation, mediations, modifications and grandparents' rights. "Simple divorces have essentially disappeared. I think most people because of finances, handle a divorce themselves if it is straightforward, but if it's high conflict or if there are any complicated issues, they look for an attorney," Annette noted. Cox is also working towards her master's in professional counseling to help gain additional perspective and tools to help her clients. With her aggressive representation of her clients and her passion for serving families, Annette Cox looks forward to providing the finest in family law services to the Valley.

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