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Joanne Mantis

King Krebs & Furgens of counsel

Women
2017
of the
Year



When Joanne Mantis started practicing law 20 years ago, it was unusual for a woman to be involved in admiralty law. But her background as a member of a Greek shipping family helped her succeed in an area where knowledge and experience of the intricacies of maritime law is a plus.

Spending many summers in Greece and being multi-lingual have allowed her to successfully work with international shipping firms that use the Port of New Orleans. Her expertise was also involved in negotiations involving the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill case.

A Tulane Law School graduate, Mantis practiced in Greece for a number of years before moving back to New Orleans in 2011.

"I feel that working abroad has given me a different perspective on interpreting the laws and also taking into account cultural differences when it comes to negotiating and settling a case," she said.

Since returning, she has been an active part of the community and chaired the 2015 Mad Hatter Fundraiser for the Women's Guild of the New Orleans Opera. She is also the magistrate for the city of Harahan and presides over the municipal court there.

Her busy life makes it a challenge to balance work and family, but this year she is staying focused on spending time with her son and enjoying his final year at home before college. She is taking the advice of several mentors, including her father, who counseled her to "Work hard, but also play hard and enjoy yourself."

"Find time to spend with your family and friends, and make great memories," she said.

If she were not practicing law, Mantis says she would probably be a psychologist or social worker.

"I want everybody to be happy," she said. That desire extends to animals, and she hopes to have time in the future to get more involved with the Louisiana SPCA.

Mantis still practices in Greece and visits there every year. She advises everyone, especially women, to learn another language and travel because it opens up so many opportunities to expand one's horizons.

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—Leslie Quinn