

Shaffer, McLauchlin & Stover, LLC

The law firm of Shaffer, McLauchlin & Stover, LLC presents a strong case for pooling resources. Gina Shaffer and Tracey McLauchlin began working together in the fall of 2009 in elder care and estate planning. Bradley Stover and Eric McLauchlin (Tracey's husband) joined the practice last year, bringing expertise in real estate, business planning, business development and related legal services. Together these attorneys provide unique collaboration.

"The ability to rely on each other for all the component parts of what we do helps us to provide a greater range of services to our clients," Mr. McLauchlin says. "For example, Gina does not frequently litigate, and I am less versed in elder law. Brad administers few estates and rarely drafts wills, but regularly handles real estate matters and development approvals. It is primarily Tracey who provides employment law advice.

"Our job is to help the client be proactive and avoid the conflict that may result later if no plan or strategy is in place."

Oftentimes, a client's needs spill over from one of these categories to the other. It's very beneficial to us and to clients to collaborate with combined expertise."

Often, personal and business planning overlap because an individual's business is part of retirement planning. In this case, it's difficult to talk about succession planning on the business side without including estate planning on the personal side. It's also difficult to plan for the business without providing additional business supports like trademark and trade name protection, cross-purchase agreements between shareholders, employment law advice and intellectual property protections.

Building a solid bond with each client is the foundation from which these attorneys design and implement their legal strategies. "We take our clients beyond the transaction and into a long-term relationship where we can serve them more fully," Mr. McLauchlin says. "Our philosophy is to represent

businesses, families and the people behind them, looking at all sides of the planning and strategy their situation requires."

The firm also values its relationships within the community. "We have established credible relationships with the agencies and organizations our clients need," notes Mr. Stover. This helps facilitate things like development approvals, permitting, licensing and contract awards.

Because of frequently changing laws and differences in laws from state to state, Mr. McLauchlin and his colleagues emphasize the importance of consulting an attorney for personal and business planning advice. Many people are reluctant to take any kind of planning action because they believe it is time consuming, voluminous and expensive. According to Mr. McLauchlin, it does not have to be any of those. "We are not big fans of coming up with more tools than there are problems to solve or challenges to address," he says. "Our job is to help the client be proactive and avoid the conflict that may result later if no plan or strategy is in place," he says.

For these attorneys, being part of the community also means remaining dedicated to charity and pro bono efforts. "Again, our services are relationship based," Ms. Shaffer says. "We share a commitment to community and to working together to find solutions for our clients, and doing so responsibly and ethically in every service area—real estate, business and personal planning."

Shaffer, McLauchlin & Stover, LLC
836 South Main Street, Suite 102
Bel Air, MD 21014
410-420-7992
www.smslawoffice.com

Pictured from left: Tracey McLauchlin, Gina Shaffer, Eric McLauchlin and Brad Stover

