PROFILE: STEPHANIE STIMPSON, TORYS LLP

Stephanie Stimpson, a partner at Torys LLP, manages a diverse corporate and transactional law practice, working with oil and gas companies on projects around the world and providing governance advice to boards of directors.

"I love living and working in Calgary, which has a small town feel but offers high-end legal work in a dynamic business community," she says.

Stimpson, 46, was born in Butte, Mont., and lived in Dubai, United Arab Emirates, for 10 years when she was growing up. She holds a bachelor's degree in international business from Georgetown University in Washington, D.C., and a law degree from the University of Montana. She clerked for the U.S. Federal Court of Appeals and then practised law in Denver, Colo., before moving to Calgary in 1998. Stimpson worked at Macleod Dixon for 14 years before joining Torys in 2012.

How would you describe yourself?

Determined, action-oriented and down to earth.

What was your first job?

When I was 19, I had a summer job at Eagle Bend Golf Course in Montana.

What attracted you to your area of specialization?

I grew up around the international oil business living in Dubai. After I moved to Calgary, I worked with Charlie Berard, who became my mentor. He had great clients working on different kinds of projects all over the world and worked closely with their boards and management teams. I wanted to emulate his practice, and he gave me the opportunity to do that. He was instrumental in my career.

What's the best part of your job?

It's never boring! I work with talented people, both inside the firm and as clients, and I'm constantly learning and pushing myself on new kinds of work, in different regions of the world. I'm happiest when I'm doing more than technical legal work, when I can contribute to the solution to a difficult problem, or provide strategic advice on a transaction.

What makes a good lawyer?

The legal profession, like other industries, is constantly changing, so you can't be complacent. Being smart, hard working, conscientious and a good communicator are the table stakes for being a good lawyer. And to be a great lawyer, it takes experience and innovation. You need to continually strive to learn, improve and adapt.

Whom do you most admire?

So many people. On a personal level, I admire my parents for having the courage to move our family from Montana in 1975 to Dubai, when it was still a Third World environment. It transformed our family's future. My parents taught us to put family first and live life to its fullest.

What are you most passionate about?

On the work front, I am passionate about building our office in Calgary, and continuing to attract top talent while maintaining our collaborative culture. On the home front, my husband David and I are passionate about having fun with our kids (daughter Ellie, 13, and son Cole, 11), supporting them and watching them play their many sports.

What does a great day off look like for you?

Trying to keep up with my kids on the ski slopes or boating on Flathead Lake in Montana.

Text: Jacqueline Louie;
PHOTO: ADRIAN SHELLARD