Gerald Morello, Jr.

With 22 years of law practice under his belt, Gerald M. Morello, Jr., understands his clients' needs – and the connection he and his team make with each of them has brought true success to the firm.

A Southgate native, Morello attended the University of Notre Dame and received his law degree and MBA at the University of Michigan at Dearborn. He chose to start his own firm in the Downriver community in 1995, and has since grown Morello Law Group, P.C. into the most well-respected legal firm in the region.

The firm employs seven attorneys and 20 support staff whose niche is estate planning. Recently, a shift in legislation has given them an even sharper focus: making sure that people don't lose their homes if they need long-term care in a nursing facility or if they experience some other catastrophic incident. Either situation can result in thousands of dollars in healthcare and recovery costs, or losing your home Morello says it's the firm's main goal to make sure this doesn't happen.

"Our practice is focused on helping our clients to either pre-plan in advance, the best ways to avoid losing their entire life savings to a nursing home stay, or preserving their assets while receiving government benefits," he explained.

This recent shift for Morello's firm is partially attributed to a state law known as the Estate Recovery Act. Enacted in 2007, the law enables the state of Michigan to reclaim homes of the deceased as reimbursement if they received government benefits – such as Medicaid, for instance.

"There are special techniques that we employ as a firm that allow residents to keep their houses while they're in a nursing home, and it lets them bequeath the home to their family, their children, without losing it," he said. He also cited the growing population of citizens aged 70 years or older as one cause for the change. Morello explained that while the Estate Recovery Act has changed the urgency for people entering long-term care, there are also certain tax laws available that have made planning for these events a little easier for individuals and their families.

When he's not in the office, Morello enjoys spending time with his wife Karen, and their three children – Gabrielle, 16; Alexa, 13; and Dominic, 11. Supporting his children's extracurricular sports events make up for most of his time away from work. He's also an avid Notre Dame football fan.

As his practice continues to grow, plans are underway to expand the Wyandotte location in 2015. Morello's greatest overall achievement, however, is not only the firm itself, but the type of firm he's founded – a comprehensive practice with a go-to team of lawyers and staff who are cost-effective and proactive. "That's resulted in us having a very successful practice," Morello said. "I have staff that have been with me for 20 years, and we're connected to every single one of our clients." ■

Morello Law Group, P.C. is located at 1800 Biddle, Wyandotte. Please visit morellolawgroup.com or call 734-281-6464 for further information.