



**DOWNRIVER ROOTS**

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## GERALD M. MORELLO, JR.

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**A**t a time when many people have left the state to work elsewhere, it's refreshing to hear of someone who decided to stay put, plant roots and grow a business in the Downriver area. That's just what Gerald Morello, Jr. did when he graduated from law school at the prestigious University of Notre Dame.

Turning a penchant for problem solving and a desire to interact with others into a career in law was an easy decision for Morello. He grew up in Southgate, went to University of Michigan Dearborn for his undergraduate studies and to Notre Dame to earn both a law degree and an MBA. Morello's choices were limitless, and yet he chose Michigan.

"When I was at Notre Dame, all the large national firms from New York, Chicago, Dallas

and elsewhere interviewed at our college to recruit," he says. So why Michigan? "My friends asked me the same question! There's a very good business community in Downriver. My family is in the area. That's just where I wanted to be."

After graduating, Morello's career took him back to Michigan where he has now been practicing law for nearly 18 years and established his own firm in Wyandotte in 1995. Since then,

he's opened additional offices in Northville and Romeo. The Morello Law Group has eight attorneys, twenty employees and is a full service firm that specializes in estate planning, business planning and estates. A niche area for them is working with auto dealerships, assisting with their day-to-day legal matters and business succession planning. Each of their eight attorneys specialize in specific areas of law which enables the firm to deliver a higher level of service in a practical manner.

As for why he works in Downriver, Fekaris explains, "The character and diversity of the people enriches my professional life. We have been Downriver for many years and have worked hard to build and maintain our ties within the community. As a result, our community ties are close, our reputation is excellent, and our relationships in Downriver, both professional and personal, are very valuable to me. I look forward to continuing to serve the people of the Downriver area for many more years."

are methodical in making certain that all the details are handled properly. All while ensuring we treat our clients the way we'd treat our family, parents or grandparents. It's an excellent recipe for success."

Morello credits his family for his success as well. He and his wife Karen recently celebrated their 15th wedding anniversary and have three children: Gabrielle, 13, Alexa, 9, and Dominic, 7. Outside of the office, Jerry and Karen enjoy watching Dominic play flag football and

## ESTATE AND BUSINESS PLANNING

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When it comes to specializing in estate and business planning, it turns out Morello's problem solving and people skills are definite advantages, "Both are very client-relationship intensive. We're able to impact clients and their families very positively by planning based on their situation," he explains. "Oftentimes clients come in with difficult situations and we can walk them through their options to find the planning that works best for them. It's very rewarding."

According to Morello, people have several misconceptions about estate planning. The biggest one is that only the wealthy can benefit from comprehensive estate planning. He maintains that it's not true – those with modest means, to those who are wealthy, can all benefit from a solid estate plan. Morello confirms that you don't have to have a large estate to need help devising a plan. And with over 7,500 estate plans under his belt, he should know what he's talking about.

Luckily for Morello, he's not the only one interested in building strong client relations or that's dedicated to the Downriver community. His partner George Fekaris seems to be cut from the same cloth. "I choose to work in our firm with my partner Gerald Morello because our client relationships are closer and more personal than if we worked within a large firm environment," Fekaris states. "We have built a team of attorneys and staff with the goal to provide the best legal services to our clients. Our collegial work ethos harnesses the talents of everyone at the firm for the benefit of our clients."

Morello Law Group's Vice President of Business Operations Callie Demski agrees with the firm's partners, "We are able to combine so many resources and that works to benefit both clients and employees alike. I believe that we all take a great deal of pride in what services we then provide to our clients."

Don't be mistaken that Gerald Morello and his firm only handle estate and business planning, they're much more multifaceted than that. Their other specialties include real estate and construction law, civil and criminal litigation and tax law. "We are a very organized and systems-based law firm," explains Morello. "We

Gabrielle and Alexa playing soccer. He also religiously follows Notre Dame football.

Even though he still cheers on his alma mater, Morello never second guesses his decision to move back to Michigan, "I don't regret it at all," he assures. "Downriver is a very tight-knit community. The people are the salt of the earth and no nonsense – which is just how we work at the law firm." ■

*For further information or to schedule an appointment, please contact Morello Law Group, P.C. (1800 Biddle Ave., Wyandotte) and Gerald M. Morello, Jr. at (734) 281-6464 or visit their Web site: MorelloLawGroup.com.*



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