

Insights: Perspectives

International Women's Day 2022 | Margaret McHugh

March 8, 2022

The only lawyer I knew growing up was my uncle, a successful trial attorney in Florida. He cautioned me against going into a legal career, telling me *“The law is a jealous mistress.”* It does not allow room for balancing family life while practicing law. I forged forward despite his warning and started my practice in 1986 but I found few female role models with both a successful career and children at home. Many female colleagues who became pregnant reasonably dropped out of Big Law, for a while, if not permanently, because it was so challenging to balance the law with the demands of being a new mother. A few of us stuck it out, pushing for, and taking advantage of, extended maternity leaves, equitable part time policies and reduced workload schedules. Fortunately, these are now commonplace, but they were not always.

For me, choosing to work a reduced schedule ended up meaning I had to wait a year longer for partnership consideration, but it was well worth it. I was elevated to partner while I was still in the hospital the day my second child, my daughter, was born. This past December, I was proud to stand beside my daughter and witness her swearing in for the California bar.



“Many female colleagues who became pregnant reasonably dropped out of Big Law, for a while, if not permanently. A few of us stuck it out, pushing for, and taking advantage of, extended maternity leaves, equitable part time policies and reduced workload schedules. Fortunately, these are now commonplace, but they were not always.”

Margaret McHugh
Partner | San Francisco

Related People



Margaret C. McHugh

t 415.273.7509

mmchugh@ktslaw.com