



Lori E. Angiel, Paralegal Working Toward a Master's Degree

[By Douglas May]

Lori Angiel says that she's well suited for the legal field. She has an analytical mind and she's very task- and detail-oriented, which she says are important attributes to have in the legal profession. She also says that she would like to see more non-attorney management positions within law firms for experienced paralegals to work toward. Angiel enjoys working in the legal field, and is also pursuing a master's degree.

Angiel was born and raised in Erie, Pennsylvania, until the age of 12. Her family then relocated to the Buffalo area, where she remained through her college years. Erie, an industrial city on the shore of Lake Erie, has also been called the Gem City because of the "sparkling" lake. Erie can have a harsh climate, being located in the "snow belt" that stretches across the northern United States. Nevertheless, Angiel says that she loved growing up in Erie because of two things: her family and the lake. "My parents each have several siblings, so I was always surrounded by my aunts, uncles, cousins, and family friends. My family's cottage is on Lake Erie. We lived there full-time in the summer throughout most of my childhood, and my two sisters and I spent our days at the beach and park."

Angiel spent her college years in Buffalo, however, and she received a bachelor's degree from SUNY@Buffalo, as well as a paralegal certificate. Angiel also took some graduate courses toward a master's in social work at SUNY@Buffalo. After she graduated from school, Angiel wanted to work in Washington, DC. She moved to the DC area right after graduation and thought that she'd get a job as a paralegal and go to law school. "I immediately moved to Maryland. I always dreamed of working in DC, and I landed a job as a Conflicts Specialist/Project Coordinator at Hogan and Hartson in Washington, DC. It was a great experience, professionally and personally. I loved working in DC; it was an amazing place to be as a "young professional." You really felt as though you were amongst something, and working so close to the Capitol and White House was really exciting to me. I'm a news and political junky, so I loved that my local news was everyone else's national news!"

When asked what made her want to become a paralegal, Angiel replies, "I always knew I'd be

Q. What do you do for fun?

A. I spend a lot of time running around after my children, which is actually a lot of fun! We love going for long walks, and spend a lot of time out doors. I also take yoga, go biking [and] kayaking, and am an avid reader.

Q. What CD is in your CD player right now, or what is the last song you listened to?

A. There are 6 CDs in my CD player right now, most of them children's CDs! But the CD that I listened to last was a mixed U2 CD, [and] the last song was "Where the Streets Have No Name."

Q. What's the last magazine you read?

A. I have just read Time and *Real Simple*.

Q. Who is your role model? Why?

A. I can't really say that I have just one role model. I've seen certain attributes that I admire in others and work to somehow incorporate them into my own life. My grandmother had her master's degree at a time when it was not as common as it is in this day and age, and that made me value education from a young age. My other grandmother stayed home and raised 6 kids, and her family was her lifeline. I respected her dedication to her family and in turn their dedication to her. It makes me want to devote myself to my children and be there for them above all else. My father was a very spontaneous and impulsive guy, and that has encouraged me to live my life a little more and indulge in my impulses once in a while.

in the legal profession. My father always called me his little litigator because of my abilities to analyze a situation and relentlessly argue my point until the opposing party conceded. It was a natural match!" At some point, Angiel says, she decided that she did not want to be attorney, so she began taking graduate classes in another area, which she says she really enjoyed and did well in. "But I still enjoy working in the legal profession, so I haven't made any moves yet."

Angiel interned at a small law firm in high school and college, and also for Senator Daniel Patrick Moynihan during her senior year in college. Her first job out of college was as a case manager at a small firm in Bethesda, Maryland. "It was a great job, and I really loved it," she says, "but my dream job was to work in DC, so I moved on and took a job at Hogan and Hartson about a year later."

Asked about the greatest influences in her life, Angiel responds, "My greatest influence has been my parents. My mom has always been a source of support, and I attribute my father with my confidence and drive to achieve. He had three daughters, and treated us as though there was nothing we couldn't accomplish. He really believed in me, and that gave me the confidence to believe in myself. We lost him to cancer 11 months ago, and I have missed him terribly since." She adds, "My husband of 6 years, Jeff, is my best friend. We talk about everything, and we really support each other. I couldn't achieve my career or personal goals without his support, so I credit my successes to him."

Angiel has a lot of interests, but she'll probably stay in the legal field, at least for now, as she



feels a true connection to it. Her goals include working toward a project management position within her current firm. She also plans on completing her master's degree. She belongs to the Western New York Paralegal Association, UB Alumni Association, and is a volunteer at Guilda's Club of WNY.

When asked if she has any advice for her peers in the legal field, Angiel says that she believes that the most important thing for any of us to accomplish is a work-life balance. She says that in the age of the Blackberry, iPhone, and wireless Internet, there is a blurred line between work and home life. But for her, she says, it allows for some flexibility. "To be present with my young

children as they grow is not just a personal goal, but essential to my happiness as a whole. Knowing that I have certain days at home with them to take care of appointments, go to parks and the zoo and gymnastics lessons, or even just be there to have lunch with them, leaves me feeling less guilty about being at the office on other days. Checking emails and doing some work while I'm home leaves me feeling less guilty about not being at the office. You have to find what works for you. It can be very stressful, these blurred lines, and trying to keep up with it all, but it allows me to feel engaged as a parent and a productive professional (on a good day at least!)."

Angiel currently works at Phillips Lytle LLP and has been there for more than five years. She works as a paralegal in the firm's Land, Environment and Energy Group and does a lot of project work, which she really enjoys. She currently works part-time, which has allowed her to be home a couple of days a week to take care of her children, including a one-year-old little girl (Marin) and a three-year-old little boy (Connor). She says that she plans to be with Phillips Lytle for a long time to come.