

Joan F. Parsons

RIEMER & BRAUNSTEIN

BY BANKER & TRADESMAN STAFF

When it comes to balancing work and family life, Joan F. Parsons could write a book.

An attorney, she is a senior partner at Riemer & Braunstein in Boston, where she specializes in commercial real estate finance.

"I love what I do because transactional work is challenging and fast-paced," she said. "Each deal is different, with its own nuances and time-sensitivity, which allows me to keep learning and refining my skills in the context of meeting the clients' objectives."

She and husband, Craig Ziady, also a practicing attorney, have four children: Emily, 20, soon to be a junior at Trinity College; Adam, 11; Claire, 8; and Kendall, 7.

Parsons said the pursuit of work/family balance is "a daily challenge which energizes me."

Her mother, Fran Parsons, a retired teacher, taught her by example, she said, that it's not only possible to be a fully-engaged parent and a working professional, but that "it can actually be very rewarding to do both, rather than choosing one over the other."

"There are days when my schedule, to-do list and daily plan present as organized, manageable undertakings," she said. "There are other days, however, when the same items present as seemingly impossible tasks.

"The ultimate challenge – striving for balance – is to treat every day as close to the same as possible, and to be confident that



JOAN F. PARSONS

"While consistently providing the highest quality legal representation to her clients throughout her career, Joan has been a leader and a role model to many women in the commercial real estate industry."

– Stanley J. Riemer

things will work out," Parsons explained. "I firmly believe that if one day starts off sideways (9 a.m. closing at work; babysitter is sick; and homework papers are inexplicably missing from respective backpacks), then the next day will be better."

She credited supportive teams at work and at home for helping her in her efforts to achieve work/life balance.

Mentoring Others

Parsons, who has practiced at Riemer & Braunstein for 20 years, considers mentoring other women in the commercial real estate industry a vital part of her career.

She has been an active member of New England Women in Real Estate (NEWiRE) for many years, and currently serves as NEWiRE's immediate past president. She mentors both formally as a coordinator and participant in the NEWiRE Mentor Program and informally as a role model to her colleagues in NEWiRE and in her own workplace. She recently created a women attorneys' group at Riemer & Braunstein, which meets regularly to discuss work/life balance and other issues of common interest.

Alison Flores, an associate in Riemer & Braunstein's Boston office, said that Parsons is a mentor, a role model and an example of the attainability and importance of the work/family balance.

Flores is about to begin her maternity leave with her first child, and said Parsons provided her practical, helpful suggestions and sound advice about scheduling, balance and continuing to service the firm's clients.

continued on page 2

Joan F. Parsons: Riemer & Braunstein

Continued from Page 1

Jennifer Voci, a junior partner in the firm's New York office, praised Parsons as a motivating example, having achieved senior partnership as well as a leadership position in NEWiRE, while raising four children. Parsons was the driving force, she said, behind her decision to join New York Commercial Real Estate Women (NYCREW). Parsons has been a member of NYCREW for several years and encourages Voci and women attorneys in the firm to further their professional development and expand their networks.

"By encouraging women – as early in

their careers as possible – to network effectively, to mentor each other and to develop and utilize their leadership skills, Joan actively pursues her goal – to motivate women to attain and succeed in visible industry leadership positions – on a daily basis," said Stanley J. Riemer, the firm's managing partner.

"While consistently providing the highest quality legal representation to her clients throughout her career, Joan has been a leader and a role model to many women in the commercial real estate industry," he said.

Parsons is involved in many community activities in Winchester, where she and her family reside. She is a graduate of Boston College Law School and Tufts University.

"Becoming a senior partner at a national law firm was always a goal of mine," Parsons said. "Having achieved that goal at the same time as raising four children is particularly satisfying."

She said she is proud of aiding NEWiRE's efforts to encourage women in the industry through networking and working together to advance their careers. ■

Reprinted with permission of Banker & Tradesman.

This document may constitute advertising under the rules of the Supreme Judicial Court of Massachusetts.