



Jennie and Mathias Bretschneider



ANSWERS BY JENNIE BRETSCHNEIDER

Q: How long have you been in business?

I have served for many years as a policy consultant to the California State Assembly and Senate and served as Assistant Chief Deputy and Counsel to the California Secretary of State. I established Davis Wills & Trusts in 2011. The law practice has grown steadily over the years and is now a full time practice. Davis Wills & Trusts has always operated in downtown Davis, in the Chen Building.

Q: When you were younger, what did you imagine doing when you grew up?

Did you dream of owning or helping to operating a business?

I dreamed of being an Astronaut, because I was fascinated by the US space exploration program. When I was a young adult, I dreamed of having a very successful career but also raising children. Looking at traditional corporate careers, I could not see a path for how to make that possible. As the oldest of five children growing up, I was extremely impressed by my own mother who—in the 1970s when the women's liberation movement was happening—went back to school nights to finish first a B.A. and then a Master's Degree, and then when the five of us kids were school age, she entered the workforce and began a career in politics. It seemed she had endless energy, because she would work a full day and then come home and cook dinner and help the little ones to bed before sitting down to prepare for the next workday. I think I learned from her that being a woman and “wanting it all” meant that I would have to be prepared to work hard, always. It helped me prepare for raising children and pursuing a career. Of course, I am very fortunate. My spouse has been very supportive and took on a major role in raising the kids and supporting the family when I went to law school.

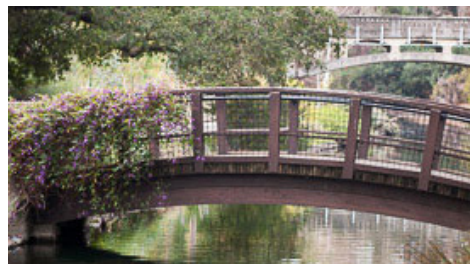


Q: What was one of your biggest challenges in starting a business or joining the team?

It is always a big leap of faith to set out on your own and start a business. It is still a leap of faith, even today after having the business for 10 years—**this year is Davis Wills & Trusts 10 year anniversary!** You always worry about income next month, next year, expenses rising, etc. But you learn to have faith in your client base and in the community that they will help your practice thrive so that you can survive and continue serving your clients, their families and the community in general.

Q: What advice would you give to other women trying to develop a business?

Just do it! You can always go back to what you were doing before if it doesn't work out. For me it has always felt better to DO the thing you are dreaming of than to worry about failure and not do the thing. Not doing can lead to procrastination, missed opportunities and regret, and you don't want to look back at your life and wish you had taken that leap!



Q: What do women, in particular, bring to business ownership or management?

I think women often bring a special sensitivity to their clients' and customers' needs and level of caring about their clients, customers and colleagues that is often missing in the traditional model of "running a business." I really care about my clients and I like hearing their stories about their kids, their experiences, and the special things like how they met and fell in love.

Q: What would you say is your greatest professional accomplishment to date?

10 years in private practice and going strong!

Q: How did the idea for your business come about?

My father died when I was fairly young, and it gave me an insight into the detailed planning that needs to be done in order to ensure that family relationships - and family finances—stay intact after death. I wanted to help other people get their estate planning done right and done thoroughly. Family relationships and family harmony are very important to me, so it is very rewarding for me to help people in this way.



Q: How did the name of your business come about?

My husband and I met here in Davis when I was a UC Davis student. We have always felt Davis is our home together, and we are very loyal to this community and this region. Davis Wills & Trusts felt like the right name for the business, because we are here to stay!

Q: What one thing have you learned as a business owner or team member that has served you well over the years?

If you take very good care of your clients, and you truly care about each and every client, then your clients tell their friends about you, and in the end it serves you well, because it helps your business grow.



Q: Do you have any new projects coming up or have you recently completed a big project or have you reached a milestone? If so, please tell us about it.

Surviving the COVID lockdowns

Q: What do you or your team do for fun/relaxation?

I like to go running, ride my bike to work, and play pickle ball. We also like to walk the Arboretum when there is an hour free in the afternoon. Anything to be outside breathing fresh air.

