

## NASHVILLE LEADERS 40 UNDER 40

### Joycelyn Stevenson

Bradley Arant Boulton Cummings LLP

Joycelyn Stevenson specializes in labor and employment law, helping businesses with everything from management training to discrimination complaints to I-9 compliance. Stevenson has been with Bradley Arant Boulton Cummings for nine years, including the past two as partner. She also is president-elect of the Council on Aging of Greater Nashville, a nonprofit she sought out after the death of her father.

**WHAT WOULD YOU TELL OTHER YOUNGER BUSINESS LEADERS TO DO TO FIND SUCCESS?** Find a great mentor and ask as many questions as you possibly can. A great mentor can make a huge difference in a person's career and development. Having people to call with questions or critique my work without fear of judgment has been invaluable to me throughout my career.

**WHAT IS THE BIGGEST CHALLENGE YOU ARE CURRENTLY FACING?** My biggest challenge is figuring out how to take my career to the next level and build a strong client base and business contacts to move up the ladder within my particular field.

**WHO WAS YOUR FAVORITE CHILDHOOD CARTOON CHARACTER?** Jerry from "Tom and Jerry." He was the underdog but always outsmarted Tom without saying a word.

**WHAT HAS BEEN YOUR BIGGEST PROFESSIONAL MISTAKE AND HOW DID YOU OVERCOME IT?** I wish I had focused on developing business earlier in my career and been very strategic about developing clients before it was even necessary. I think many young attorneys are taught to focus on billing hours and not on developing those professional relationships earlier. I became very involved in the community immediately after graduating from law school since I didn't have natural family or

other professional connections to the city. That involvement has been very helpful to me especially now that I have been practicing almost a decade.

**TELL US ABOUT SOMEONE WHO INSPIRES YOU.** The members of the board of the Council on Aging inspire me. I found this board shortly after the passing of my father when I was looking to get more involved in issues affecting seniors. I wanted to help others cope with some of the issues my sister and I struggled with for so many years.

**DESCRIBE YOUR STRANGEST WORK EXPERIENCE.** One of my strangest work experiences involved deposing a witness with a Bible. It was a religious discrimination lawsuit and much of the deposition involved quoting scriptures.

What do you think your industry will look like when you retire? The model of the traditional law firm will involve creative uses of technology to effectively serve clients but at the same time allow for work/life balance.

**WHAT WAS YOUR FAVORITE TELEVISION SHOW WHEN YOU WERE 10?** I had several, including "The Cosby Show" and "Murder She Wrote." (OK, and "Golden Girls.")

**WHAT WOULD BE YOUR BACK-UP JOB IF YOU COULDN'T DO WHAT YOU ARE DOING NOW?** I would be president of a university.

#### About Stevenson

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#### FACEBOOK: BUSINESS OR PLEASURE?

Pleasure, even though I have accepted some friends for purely business purposes.

#### WHAT CAN NASHVILLE DO TO RECRUIT AND RETAIN TALENT?

More can be done to embrace Nashville's great diversity and to encourage the community and local businesses to view diversity as a business necessity and vital to the city's economic growth.



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