



Member Spotlight



GETTING TO KNOW DORI J. DIXON

What drew you to the practice of special needs planning?

I sort of fell into special needs planning. I started out practicing family law, but I didn't like the constant conflict. I knew I wanted to work with families and not businesses, so I ended up going into estate planning. The firm I worked for also did elder law and some special needs planning. In college, I did a lot of volunteer work with elder and disability organizations, including taking animals from the animal shelter to visit with seniors at an assisted living facility and pairing up with a disabled adult for social outings. When I discovered special needs planning, it was the perfect fit.

How do you describe your work to people who are unfamiliar with it?

I help families plan for the future and educate them about the benefits and resources available so that their loved ones can have the best quality of life possible.

What advice would you give a young person who aspires to practice special needs law?

Get a copy of the Special Needs Handbook – that was my bible when I first started practicing. Familiarize yourself with the SSA POMS and your local Medicaid manual and reach out to an attorney practicing in this area to be a mentor.

What's something about you that might surprise others?

I once hiked 25 miles in a day from Hanging Rock to Pilot Mountain for the Make-A-Wish Foundation – I'm hoping to do it again soon.

Who or what inspires you the most?

The people in SNA for sure. We all have so much on our plate and seeing our members be so generous with their time and knowledge to help one another and our communities inspires me to do more as well.