

“All of my children have been patients at CHEO” Katherine tells us, “So it’s an opportunity for me to give back to an institution that has greatly impacted my life, but also the broader community.”

A journey as impressively successful as Katherine Cooligan’s cannot be an easy one, and she speaks of the turbulence of a career that demands struggle and sacrifice. “In many ways, those

struggles have defined me as much if not more than the triumphs,” she says. “The key is to find ways to overcome those emotions and sometimes that means just doing it anyway, in spite of the emotions.” The real cost for Cooligan has been the difficulties that are inevitable as a career-driven mother, mourning the time she has had to sacrifice with her family, especially as her children now move towards their

independence.

Katherine Cooligan’s outlook is just as admirable as her work ethic: “My professional successes have surpassed my expectations,” she says, “My goals for the future are to mentor, motivate and support young professionals in the development of their careers, and to encourage women in leadership by sharing my experiences.” ■

Claire TREMBLAY



Having opened her very own practice in 2014, Claire Tremblay is a shining example of independence and drive. Now the lead lawyer at Tremblay Law Office, Claire Tremblay attended the University of Ottawa, where she earned her Bachelor of Laws. Originally from Australia, she worked as a journalist both there and in Canada before becoming a lawyer as well as a National Coordinator and Parliamentary Lobbyist for women’s equality and human rights.

Tremblay’s office specializes in family and refugee law, and giving voice to the unheard is what keeps her passionate about her work.

“Voices that may not otherwise be heard – such as that of children, domestic violence victims and refugees – can be heard in a safe arena — in a courthouse,” says Tremblay.

Claire Tremblay’s positive influence extends far beyond the recent opening of her own practice. Tremblay has been a board member for Housing Help for seven years, helping people in need of affordable housing find information and assistance through the Ottawa-based organization. She has also volunteered with several Ottawa groups, including the Catholic Immigration Centre, the Ottawa Community Immigrant Services Organization, Centre for Equality Rights in Accommodation, Amnesty International, as well as Immigrant Women Services Ottawa (IWSO). One of

Tremblay’s proudest achievements of her career so far, she tells us, is being awarded, in 2015, a Volunteer Award from IWSO for pro-bono legal work with immigrant women in Ottawa since 2012.

“I try to place myself in the position of my clients. I take my responsibility toward them seriously. Now, this sounds like just another cliché, however, I am acutely aware (as are many lawyers) that being a lawyer is not just any job – the affect of any family court orders or the results of a refugee hearing – will change the lives of my clients, possibly for many years to come. There is a responsibility that comes with that – to do your best for your clients and to present the facts of their situation as clearly and as coherently as possible.”

Claire Tremblay’s moral perspective is as robust as her resumé, and her volunteer work as impressive as her legal portfolio — and Ottawa is all the better for it ■