

Memorialized Resolution of the Dauphin County Bar Association

Upon the Death of Karen Smith Coates

A life well lived is a precious gift, of hope and strength and grace, from someone who has made our world a brighter, better place. It's filled with moments, sweet and sad with smiles and sometimes tears, with friendships formed and good times shared, and laughter through the years. A life well lived is a legacy of joy and pride and pleasure, a living, lasting memory our grateful heart's will treasure. (Author unknown).

Karen Smith Coates was born in Philadelphia. She was the daughter of Carmella Breen, mother of Trey Coates and Caleigh Romano, sister of Andrea Girton and Richard Smith III and companion to Bob Taylor, who has joined us here today.

Not surprising to anyone who knew Karen, she was the Salutarian of Bloomsburg High School, Class of 1981. She graduated Cum Laude from Bloomsburg University Class of 1985. During her time at Bloomsburg, she was a member of the Sigma Sigma Sigma Sorority. She would then proceed to obtain her law degree from Dickinson School of Law, where she served as the Comments Editor for the Dickinson Law Review and a member of the Woolsack Honor Society. She received her law degree in 1988.

A scholarship fund has been established in her honor at Dickinson to assist law students who seek a career in the law and to promote public service.

It is difficult to fully capture the personal and professional attributes of Karen. Karen was so many things to so many. She was a mother, sister, daughter, friend, a brilliant lawyer, political strategist, a consensus builder, a litigator, she saw the big picture, the minor details and somehow managed to always know where the 203 House members were on every issue. Many lawyers have a niche, Karen had a career as diverse as her skill set. She excelled at every position and her competence was unmatched.

She spent the early part of her career in private practice first at Hetrick, Zalesky, Ernico & Pierce before joining at the law firm of Thomas, Thomas and Hafer focusing on insurance defense. Karen was a valued member of the litigation division and quickly established herself as one of Jimmy Thomas' "go to" counsel. She earned a reputation as a tenacious litigant and tough negotiator. Karen earned the respect of her clients, her peers, her opponents and the Courts. She was able to balance zealous advocacy and reasonable compromise like no other. Nobody would out-prepare Karen and you easily accepted her word as the truth.

When Burke McLemore and Ed Jordan needed a highly skilled litigator to join the Workers' Compensation team, they knew they could count on Karen and their trust was well placed.

After her time at the firm, she worked in private practice with Judge Coates. She later accepted a position as a Law Clerk with the Honorable Scott Evans. This position allowed her to spend more

time with her children and family. With her established background in Civil Litigation coupled with Judge Evans' criminal litigation experience, this was a partnership made in legal heaven. No challenge was too great for this Chambers. Litigation attorneys would commonly refer to her as Judge Coates as she conducted many pretrial conferences in the Judge's stead. The only time Judge Evans recalls Karen being slightly unnerved was when he placed a motion detection rubber rat in her office. Karen was not amused. With her superior skills being underutilized, she left Judge Evans for a new type of uncharted waters.

Karen accepted a position working with Representative Ron Marsico on the House Judiciary Committee. Karen handled each issue with ease, built consensus among the committee members, asked pointed questions and kept everyone on their toes, always conducting herself in a professional manner.

Karen's career continued to progress as she served as the Director of Legislative Affairs for the PA House of Representatives. Karen was a natural fit for the position. She had a command of the law, legislative procedures and rules, confidence and the ability to debate the most seasoned professionals while never losing her sense of humor.

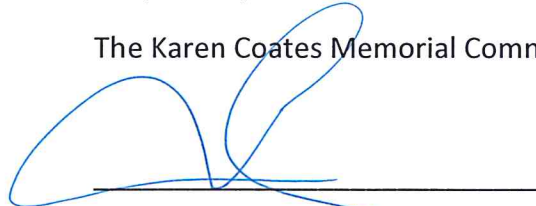
While most people would be overwhelmed managing all of the legislation for the PA House, Karen was ready for a bigger challenge. She was promoted to the Chief of Staff/Chief Counsel to the Speaker of the House. She was the first female Chief of Staff. Despite the hectic schedule, the ever-changing political landscape and the juggling required for this position, she always had time to mentor others. So many employees would recount how she encouraged them, provided them with positive feedback and inspired them to forge ahead when they had a difficult day.

With all of these accomplishments, it is of no surprise that Karen was honored as one of the Top 25 Women in Pennsylvania. Although Karen has left us, she is not forgotten; she leaves behind a legacy of hard work, character, tenacity, a passion for life and a never-ending love for her children.

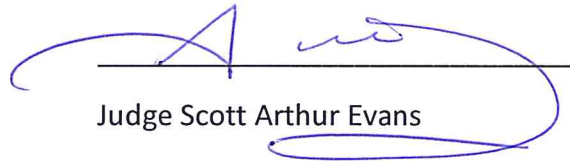
Therefore, be it resolved that in the passing of Karen Coates, the Bar, the PA General Assembly and the community have lost a loving mother, a caring sister, a loyal friend and a zealous advocate.

And be it further resolved that copies of this Memorial Resolution shall be spread upon the records of the Dauphin County Courts and the Dauphin County Bar Association, and that the original shall be filed in the Office of the Prothonotary, and copies transmitted to her family.

Respectfully Submitted,
The Karen Coates Memorial Committee



Judge John J. McNally, III



Judge Scott Arthur Evans



Annmarie Kaiser