

suburban life

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Led by **Carol A. Shelly**,
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an honest, empathetic,
and impassioned approach
to seeking justice for
injured clients.

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The Eye of an **ADVOCATE**

Led by **Carol A. Shelly**, the legal team of Shelly Law Offices, LLC takes an honest, empathetic, and impassioned approach to seeking justice for injured clients.



CAROL A. SHELLY HEARD THE CALL TO FIGHT FOR JUSTICE AT AN EARLY AGE.

As a seventh grader watching the infamous Watergate hearings with her father, Shelly was inspired to pursue a career devoted to righting the wrongs done to others. She attended Gettysburg College, followed by Widener University School of Law, where she pursued her Juris Doctor. Shelly held down a full-time job during law school, focusing nights and weekends on her studies. Upon graduation, she went straight into a career working in the Bucks County Public Defender's Office.

Shelly spent four years there, lending her talents to cases ranging from shoplifting to first-degree murder. That experience solidified her talent and passion for trying cases. She spent the next 22 years perfecting her craft at another firm before branching out in 2012 with her own private practice, Doylestown-based Shelly Law Offices, LLC. Today, the practice is devoted to helping those who have been injured, in a car crash, as a result of medical negligence, on a property with unsafe conditions, or those seeking justice for the wrongful death of a loved one.

"I have to say, starting my own firm, being a solo practitioner handling the level of cases that I handle—often catastrophic in nature—was hugely risky," she says. "It was very challenging at the beginning. I have been fortunate that other lawyers trust me to handle their cases for them. That, and lots of hard work, have made the difference. The fact that I'm approaching the 10th anniversary of starting my firm is incredible. I'm very proud of how far we've come."

Shelly has not only "made it," but also continues to excel in her field. Her practice is thriving.

Shelly carries an AV Preeminent Rating by Martindale-Hubbell, which means her peers recognize and rank her at the highest level of professional excellence in legal knowledge, communication skills, and ethical standards. In addition, she has been named a Super Lawyer by the company of the same name—a part of trusted news source Thomson Reuters—for almost every one of the past 17 years. Shelly just learned she has been selected as one of the Top 50 Women Lawyers in Pennsylvania by Super Lawyers for 2022.

Shelly has been a member of the Pennsylvania Bar Association and American Bar Association since 2000, and served in the past as president of both the Bucks County Bar Association and the Bucks County Bar Foundation. She is a member of the American Board of Trial Advocates, of which membership is by invitation only to a trial lawyer of high personal character and honorable reputation.

"Clients want a lawyer who knows what he or she is doing," says Shelly, who has been trying cases for more than 35 years. "I know it sounds silly, but they want a lawyer who will be honest—share the good and bad about a case—and who will fight for them. I handle small cases as well as the biggest cases, and I do it as well as the large firms. I'm not afraid to get into the courtroom and fight. As a public defender, I tried the first battered woman syndrome case in Pennsylvania in 1989."

That being said, not every client is a perfect fit for her firm. After careful review of the unique facts and circumstances presented by every potential medical malpractice case,



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—Carol A. Shelly, Shelly Law Offices, LLC

Shelly estimates she declines about ninety percent of cases. Even so, she feels a responsibility to inform those individuals as to why.

"I look at every case with the eye of an advocate," she says. "I consider every case, and every client's situation, very seriously. I want my clients to be satisfied with my representation, and this is true even of someone whose case I decline. Last week I spoke with the family member of a client whose case I declined, who said, 'You've given me more information in the last 30 days than my other lawyer gave me in a year and a half.'"

"I take the time to answer questions from those experiencing unimaginable difficulties after their own injury and also from family members who have lost a loved one in an accident, hospital, or nursing home set-

ting," she continues. "Whether or not I take a case, I try to provide people with valuable information to help them know exactly what happened and why. For those clients I do represent, I work tirelessly to ensure they get compensated for their serious injuries that could have been avoided."

Presently, Shelly's team comprises herself as well as attorney Katherine Shea White, two paralegals, and two assistants who support the attorneys and clients.

'Fire in the Belly'

"When I was with the Bucks County Public Defender's Office, I'd go in on the weekends to sit and read transcripts of old murder trials," Shelly shares. "I was fascinated with those transcripts. Reading them motivated me in handling my own case load. I call it the 'fire in the belly.'"

This passion is something that keeps Shelly focused even during challenging times. As one can imagine, a career dedicated to helping people in pain can bear a heavy weight.

"I've been very fortunate to have clients whom I genuinely like and connect with, and have a lot of empathy for," she says. "I know what it's like to lose a loved one; my father was 51 when he died. I've always thought that if I'd lost my father because of medical negligence, it would've been much harder to process."

"My clients are not stereotypical money-seekers," she continues. "I don't have clients like that, and I have declined many cases like that. In my practice, we accept only legitimate cases from people who primarily want justice, and that motivates me."

In addition to her passion for helping others, Shelly feels drawn to the scientific side of her work. Every time she takes on a new case, she enjoys delving into the medical aspects specific to that case. With the assistance of experts, she "learns the medicine." As she puts it, "The medicine fascinates me."

As for the future, Shelly has high aspirations split between the personal (spending time with her family, especially her grandchildren) and the professional (continuing to excel on her clients' behalf). One thing is for certain, according to Shelly: "I will continue to do my best for my clients, and go from there." ■



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