

Interview Assessment #3

Name of Professional: Christy Albano

Profession/Title: Family and Divorce Lawyer, Solo Practice

Business/Company Name: Albano Law, PLLC

Date of Interview: Friday, October 6th

Assessment:

My third informational interview was with a solo family and divorce lawyer in Plano, Texas, Ms. Christy Albano. I was really happy to meet with her, because the more interested I am became in family and divorce law, the more I wanted to find more professionals in that field to interview. I was a little concerned about the practice because similar to my second interview with Ms. Whitehouse, Ms. Albano runs a solo practice with just herself and her assistant, Ms. Pine. I contacted her through LinkedIn and because she already had experience mentoring someone in the past, she had a pretty good understanding of the ISM program.

We met in a contemporary office building with lots of meeting spaces and it was pretty easy to get there because it was only about 10 minutes away. On the one hand, I like the ease of getting to more local attorneys, however I understand that the compromise I face with that is working with smaller, or solo, firms.

Ms. Albano was really intelligent. She was very professional and incredibly informative and I learned a lot about being able to brand yourself to clients and build your client base when working in a solo firm. When I interviewed with Ms. Whitehouse, in contrast, although they both worked independently of a larger company, most of Ms. Whitehouse's clients came as recommendations and connections from previous clients. Ms. Albano took on 30-40 cases at a time, saying that ideally she would have fewer, but bigger cases.

One thing that I really found fascinating about my interview with her is that she had the intention of working in civil rights law when she was in college, similar to how I started this year with the intent of working more with a nonprofit. She enjoys family law

so much now though because she still has the opportunity to change things and help people, just on a smaller more personal scale and her work is never boring. I still wonder if she regrets choosing a less large-scale-helping profession in law and if she ever gets lonely working primarily by herself. Even though I am an introvert and do most of my best work independently, I don't know if I would be wholly content only ever relying on myself every single day without fail. Something about being with other people, even though I'm not the most social, is comforting and after interviewing with two different solo lawyers, I consider if they ever wish they could interact more with other colleagues in their workday, or if interacting with clients and mediators and judges is enough.

Overall, I really enjoyed my interview with Ms. Albano. I liked her a lot and was able to gain more information about family law. To me it seemed like Ms. Albano worked more on the *family* side of family and divorce law, while Ms. Armstrong was more on the *divorce* side, but both were uniquely interesting in their own respect to talk to and accumulate insight about their line of work. I definitely came away with, as always after interviews, more confidence talking to professionals, but with this interview specifically a reassessment of my goals for the year. I really considered the negatives to working in a solo private practice and especially the negatives of asking someone in a solo practice to be my mentor, as well. In addition to that, I continually get closer to family and divorce law as a whole, learning more about it and the skills and emotional stability that is rather necessary for a successful career working with others in some of the most tumultuous times of their lives.