

## With You Every Step Of The Way

If you were to ask Scott Eggleston's mother what he was like as a child, she would tell you that he was pretty much exactly the same as he is now: Steadfast, Determined, Hard-Working, and constantly trying to resolve any and all conflict. Would it come as a surprise to any who knew this Virginia Beach native that he would end up as an Attorney? Probably not -- to this day, there is a small sheet of paper hanging in his office, meticulously typed by his eight year old pointer finger (on a typewriter no less!), mediating a peaceful negotiation of a major moment in the Eggleston house - his family's move to a new home.

With emotions running high and an older sister who was not happy about giving up her backyard swing set, Scott disappeared to type a short but insightful agreement, quickly running back into the family room with pens in hand. The agreement - or "Treaty" to a precocious eight year old - simply stated that Scott would help move if everyone promised to be happy. And yes, signatures were required. This, as much as anything else, speaks to a point that is as much a part of Scott as his easy smile or affable camaraderie - a belief that the best possible solution, in any situation, is where everyone leaves feeling happy.

Scott Eggleston grew up in Virginia Beach crabbing, kayaking on the water as a boy, and later rowing for Old Dominion University ("ODU") as part of their crew team. After graduating from ODU, Scott went to work for an insurance giant that had just built a new call center in Virginia Beach. Now, for someone who dislikes conflict and wishes happiness for all, the role of Insurance Claims Adjuster could seem like a burden. Scott spent his time handling bodily injury claims, working with in-house counsel and plaintiff's attorneys who were representing injured parties. With a constant emotionally-charged atmosphere, as well as individuals who were anything but happy, Scott began to sort through the problems as well as the people in each case, looking past the common road blocks such as anger, distrust, and frustration, to try and find the clearest and straightest route for all-around satisfaction.

"It was surprising, actually", says Scott, "how much harder some claims became to settle the longer they went on. You would think that each conversation would be a step forward towards a resolution, instead of a step backwards." After a few years and several promotions, Scott began to see what each side was doing unsuccessfully. "In the beginning", says Scott, "it is about the individual being heard - and I am not talking about giving someone the token phone call and expected lip service - but really listening and empathizing with the individual's situation. Once I started focusing on the 'injured party' as a person, not just a claimant, I could hear a fear underneath all the anger and frustration. 'If I can't work, what is going to happen to my family?' 'What if this pain never goes away?' 'What is going to happen to me and how long will it take?' Stress, anxiety, and a fear of the unknown, make any situation worse. Instead of everyone working together to ease an individual's concerns as quickly as possible, I discovered that neither in-house counsel nor the plaintiff's attorneys prioritized constant communication or a compassionate shoulder. I guess you could say it was right about then that I realized I could do it better - helping individuals or families - without the smoke screens and bureaucracy that larger companies and firms seem to employ."

And without so much as a look over his shoulder, Scott found himself at the University of Richmond School of Law in Richmond, Virginia, studying the law - not so much to become an Attorney, but to arm himself with the knowledge and skills to make it possible to resolve issues and conflicts and attempt to make people happy.

It was during his last summer of law school that Scott met Asheboro native Lia Vuncannon, who had just finished undergraduate study at University of Richmond (UR), receiving a Bachelor of Arts in Communications as well as English. Scott smiles and his eyes twinkle in slight amusement as he recalls seeing Lia for the first time. "I was working for a local mortgage company closing refinance loans at the height of a refinance boom and my supervisor, who was also a friend, called me into his office to let me know he was interviewing a UR graduate for a marketing/PR/client service type of role. The next thing I knew, I was completely smitten with this girl who was constantly lamenting about a lack of something called Cheerwine in Richmond, as well as the lack of a decent vinegar-based coleslaw to go ON, not beside, her BBQ sandwich."

Once Scott graduated law school and passed the Virginia Bar on his first try, he proposed to Lia. And her response? An immediate: "How do you feel about taking and passing the North Carolina Bar?" Scott must have felt okay about it, because he proceeded to do just that - take and pass the North Carolina Bar (again on his first try).

With several years of real estate and tax law under his belt, Scott and Lia decided that they were ready to start their family. There was only one place in Lia's mind where their family would start, grow, and take root: Home. "When Lia first started her campaign to move back home, to Asheboro, she was very quick to point out all of Asheboro's selling points. After having lived here for quite a few years, I now find myself pointing out all of Asheboro's selling points to anyone outside the area. There is something to be said for a community that looks out for one another, for businesses that take into consideration more than the bottom line, and for having your in-laws/babysitters less than three miles away". It was that sense of community that had Scott knocking on William W. Ivey's door.

"When I think about the firm now, and how everything came together so perfectly, it makes me feel both very lucky as well as grateful (one could argue here how luck and preparation go hand in hand). I was meeting with H.R. Gallimore, an Asheboro commercial real estate broker, to talk about some real estate and tax law, when he happened to suggest that Mr. Ivey might be looking for an associate. I walked right out of H.R.'s door and down the street to Mr. Ivey's (another thing to love about Asheboro, being able to walk from one office to another, or from Register of Deeds to the bank). After several meetings and conversations, Scott joined Mr. Ivey's firm in February 2008 and began to develop the real estate practice. "Mr. Ivey's firm had an impressive reputation that he had built from the ground up over the past forty years. I was excited to come on board to a firm that had cut its teeth on putting the client first with service that was professional, efficient, and reassuring. As I continued to develop the real estate side of the firm from 2008-2010, Mr. Ivey began to involve me in the estate administration/probate and estate planning practice areas as well." In January 2011, Scott took over the management of the law firm. Mr. Ivey moved to a semi-retired position continuing to handle his client's affairs a couple of days a week.

But Scott did not stop there. In July 2014, the law firm of Ivey & Eggleston merged with another local firm with a great reputation, Smith & Alexander. As Archie Smith retired from the firm, Wilson Alexander and two of his staff joined Ivey & Eggleston, with a primary goal of expanding the firm's real estate practice. This change was so successful that, in September 2015, Scott hired another attorney, Taylor Callicutt, to lend his real estate expertise to the firm. At the end of 2015, Mr. Ivey retired, having provided legal services

to the community for over 40 years. At around the same time, and with an eye to the future, Scott made more room for his growing staff by renovating the upper floor of his Worth Street building.

Besides real estate, the firm provides legal services related to estate planning, estate administration/probate, elder law, and traffic violations. With 7,000 baby boomers turning 65 years old every day and Asheboro's designation as a Certified Retirement Community, they are poised for steady growth as the population grows and more retirees choose to make their home in Asheboro and Randolph County.

Scott's philosophy is that he and his staff are there to make their clients' lives easier. "When we get involved in an estate administration/probate case, we are dealing with a person who just lost a loved one. Often they are overwhelmed with the loss, so in addition to providing the direction on how to administer the estate correctly, we take the burden of the estate administration off their shoulders. We provide guidance every step of the way. The client is in charge, but we take care of all the details, both major and minor - preparing and filing the inventory, the accounting, and any other required documents. Our end goal is to have our clients feel taken care of."

Never losing sight of the firm's core values to provide excellent and compassionate service to its clients, Scott's goal continues to be growing the firm, possibly by opening satellite offices in other towns and counties around the Triad.

As an adult, Scott has come to accept that conflict is a part of life. He has also accepted his calling to alleviate the frustration, anger, and sense of loss that often accompany it. If you don't yet have a will, would like to discuss planning for the future such as granting Powers of Attorney to a trusted family member or friend, or are concerned about protecting your assets should you ever need long-term care, please consider Scott's office to assist you through the process. After all, who doesn't want to leave their Attorney's office happy?

Scott Eggleston is the owner of the law firm of Ivey & Eggleston, Attorneys at Law. He is a member of the North Carolina and Virginia State Bars. He lives in Randolph County with his wife, Lia, and their children Lucy, Cannon and Henry. Contact: [scott@iveyeggleston.com](mailto:scott@iveyeggleston.com) or (336) 625-3043.