

Nurturing Growth, Legal Expertise and Professional Connections in UAE Wealth Management



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What was the winning formula of you that explains why you won?

I joined Stephenson Harwood's Dubai office in August 2023, and we are proud to be the largest private wealth team at any international law firm within the United Arab Emirates ("UAE"). I have practised in the UAE for 16 years and have experienced developments in local laws and processes which have revolutionised wealth management and succession planning.

I trained at a UK law firm that provided me with a solid foundation of the core skills to advise private clients. Their needs differ greatly from corporate clients not only in terms of delivery of legal services and market awareness, but in the ways to maintain relationships and the importance of recognising the often-complex objectives of individuals and families when it comes to management and succession of their assets. Developing deeper connections and a high level of emotional intelligence have allowed me not only to widen my client base, but also to create longstanding professional connections with wealth management professionals.

The winning formula in a nutshell? The combination of a forward thinking and nurturing environment which is agile and creates limitless growth for professional development, coupled with in-depth local legal experience gained by being present in the region for almost two decades and building valuable relationships with other professionals.

What are you going to do to remain competitive and stay ahead?

Being at the forefront of legislative and policy developments in the areas of UAE inheritance and succession matters, I am an active member of STEP Arabia and a TEP. STEP is a worldwide organisation which represents its members in all policy matters relating to the private client community. In addition, my involvement in the DIFC Wills and Probate Registry working group, my position as the first named DIFC Wills draftsman, and my connections throughout various government and private sector entities mean I can continue to

advise clients on the most relevant and up to date developments in UAE wealth and succession management.

Who inspires you, either inside or outside your organisation?

My private wealth colleagues inspire me with their passion, acumen, and unique personalities which allow them to provide the best legal advice for complex client requirements. I am in awe of their innovative and approachable manner which makes them some of the most sought-after professionals in the UAE legal environment and I'm proud to be part of the team.

I am fortunate to come from an inspirational family – my parents have always lived by their principals and faith regardless of the challenges they have faced. My siblings have each found their unique place in their lives and become the best version of themselves. My own family continues to inspire me; I have three young children who drive me to achieve the most whilst staying true to myself and living in the present, and my husband's endless support and encouragement pushes me to aim higher.

Where do you see the wealth management industry and your part in it going in the next five years?

Stephenson Harwood has been in the Middle East for over a decade and has been at the forefront of the industry having identified key practice areas and expanded its team to service the region accordingly. The UAE is experiencing an influx of HNW and UHNW individuals/families seeking to move not only their corporate operations but also their personal wealth. This phenomenon coupled with exciting legislative developments in areas of succession, personal status and asset structuring to bring the UAE in line with international norms have cemented the region as an appealing jurisdiction for wealth protection and creation. I will continue to educate clients on the legal landscape, add value to their wealth and succession management requirements and influence the local wealth management profession by being a thought leader, and championing positive legislative developments.