



Melissa R. Gillis, Associate

"I believe that an important key to being a successful attorney is adaptability. I adjust my strategy to suit each situation as it presents itself. I adapt to judges' styles as well as those of opposing counsel. Sometimes I have to be aggressive and take a hard-line stance, but sometimes it makes more sense to be flexible and negotiate. I also enjoy taking a client through a sometimes very emotional cycle to a satisfactory result. It makes me feel good at the end of the day when I've successfully guided somebody through a complex area of the law and accomplished their goals. My clients know that I have listened to their feelings, anxieties, fears and wishes, and have advocated for them accordingly.

Areas of Practice:

Domestic Relations & Family, Real Estate & Zoning, Special Education

Education:

Quinnipiac University School of Law, J.D. 2000
Elms College, B.A., 1996

Bar & Court Admission:

Commonwealth of Massachusetts
U.S. District Court, District of Massachusetts

Professional & Community Activities Include:

Certified: Limited Assistance Representation program with the Hampden County Probate and Family Court, 2009 - Present
Member: Human Rights Committee, The Association for Community Living, 2009 - Present
Member: Women's Business Owners Alliance of Pioneer Valley, 2009 - Present
Member: Women's Partnership – Affiliated Chambers of Commerce of Greater Springfield, Inc, 2009 - Present
Founder and Leader: Daisy Girl Scout Troop 557, Girl Scouts of America, 2008 - Present
Volunteer: Dial-A-Lawyer, 2008 - Present
Volunteer: Walk for Autism
Member: Smart Start Preschool Parent Activity Board

Awards, Achievements & Appointments Include:

Recipient: Distinguished Academic Achievement Award in Bankruptcy, 2000
Recipient: Distinguished Academic Achievement Award in Representing Clients, 2000
Recipient: Excellence in Clinical Workaround Award, 2000
Recipient: Tax Litigation Award, 2000

Publications & Lectures Include:

Special Education: What Every Parent Should Know About Their Child's IEP, *Healthcare News*, March 1, 2011
Developmental Delay or Disability? Making Early Identification of Your Child's Special Needs, *BusinessWest*, January 31, 2011
Special-education Assessment and the IEP - A Chance for You to Advocate for Your Child, *HealthCare News*, July 10, 2010
Ten reasons to hire a lawyer for domestic-relations proceedings, *BusinessWest*, April 27, 2009

