

Women's History Month: Women to Watch Spotlight | Samantha Woods

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In honor of Women's History Month, we'd like to introduce you to Applications Manager Samantha Woods of the firm's Information Technology team. She joined MGC in 2008 after moving to Columbia from West Virginia with her husband, Jeremy, and twins, Daphne and Max.

Tell us a little bit about yourself – your background, your family, etc.

"I grew up and attended college in West Virginia. In 2005, my husband and I moved to South Carolina for a job opportunity. We have 13-year-old twins, Daphne and Max. I love to cook, read and do crafty things like quilting, embroidery and painting with my daughter. I'm currently reading Building a Second Brain by Tiago Forte. It's a book about personal knowledge management which has been a challenge for me over the past few years. I'm working on a system using One Note, ClickUp and One Drive to help me stay on top of the information I need access to."

How did you end up at MGC?

"I began my IT career while in college working at the Prosecutor's Office back home. I started off doing desktop support and even helped with technology setup for trial presentations. While working there I obtained my MCSA and MCSE certifications and began working on servers, managing Active Directory and Microsoft Exchange. This opened the door for me to move into a Network Administrator position at an insurance company here in South Carolina in 2005. That insurance company was bought, and my position was eliminated in 2007. My job search led me to a local recruiter who happened to be the mother of a coworker from the insurance company, and she encouraged me to apply at MGC. I started at MGC as a Network Engineer, and five years later was offered the position of Applications Manager. This July, I'll celebrate 15 years with MGC. "

How do you balance work and life?

"I'm not going to pretend like I'm great at this – I am known to have my phone on me pretty much all the time. However, working from home has been a game changer for my work/life balance. I'm able to easily attend events at school, there is less rushing to pick up kids to get to practice or games and better sleep habits. I also work with a great group of people with a shared value of work/life balance. If I take a few days off, they will do their best to cover everything they can and I'm happy to return the favor when they are out of the office."

You are rocking it in a male-dominated industry (technology) – how do you combat biases in your industry?

"Where I'm at in life and my career now, I honestly don't feel like I encounter bias. Perhaps when I was younger there were incidents, things like lower pay or being excluded, but I've always been determined to better myself and learn new things, and I made use of the opportunities I had to push myself on to the next level."

What advice would you give to women entering the tech field?

"Know the business/industry you're supporting as well as you know the technology. When you take the time to learn about your business, you're able to provide better support, build better tools and solve problems that others can't. Continue to grow your skills, look for ways to increase your productivity and build relationships outside of your tech teams. All these things will add to your success."