



KATHIE J. GUMMERE, ATTORNEY AT LAW



Kathie J. Gummere, a Phoenix attorney, focuses her legal practice on estate planning and document preparation for both individuals and families. Gummere works with a varied clientele, ranging from gay and lesbian couples, to married and unmarried couples with or without children, to elderly and probate clients. Her goal is to get her clients the documents they need to protect their families and their wishes.

While her decision to become an attorney can't be considered a "spur of the moment" choice, the action was the result of a flash of inspiration. "I had just left a job as a flight attendant when a friend asked what I would be if I could be anything I wanted," Gummere explains. She responded immediately. She wanted to be a lawyer. While she was at first surprised by her instant response, she admits that, "the more I thought about it, the more I realized that was what I wanted to be."

Her first exposure to the profession as a corporate law attorney did not live up to her expectations. Disappointed, she left the practice and applied to nursing school. For five years, she focused her attention on nursing, primarily on end-of-life care with a hospice. It was during those years, that inspiration struck again. "Seeing how families ignored

patient's wishes when there were no controlling documents made me decide to go back to practicing law, focusing on the same end-of-life issues that affected my hospice patients."

"I believe that my nursing background makes me particularly understanding of the need for end-of-life planning and for the problems faced by those who have disabilities or life-altering conditions, as well as those who are just starting a family and want to be prepared," Gummere explains. "I enjoy working with elderly clients and am very comfortable speaking with them about end-of-life choices and taking the time to explain concepts to them in a way they understand." In fact, Gummere currently serves as a resource for social workers of Hospice of the Valley and Hospice of Arizona, answering legal questions regarding hospice patients and their families.

When Gummere reentered the legal field, she knew she couldn't walk the traditional route and join with another firm. "Because of my age and independent streak, I went solo," she says. The little house off of Woodland Avenue offers a unique setting for a law office. Built in 1916, the home is quaint and unassuming with hardwood floors and a homey atmosphere. Clients park on the street and are greeted by Gummere and her legal assistant. Together, they operate a thorough and organized practice. They take the time to make sure each client understands their options and how the documents work.

"It's just my assistant and me—oh, and the dog," says Gummere. While a little unconventional, Gummere has seen the miracles her dog, Sunny (affectionately known as the Barry Bonds of Lhasa Apso), brings to her firm. As in hospitals, Sunny's presence offers a calming effect to Gummere's practice. "Normally, he stays in my office during meetings, but if a client is particularly stressed, I ask if they would like to have him join us," Gummere begins. "Many have said yes, and I can see their stress levels dissipate as they start to pet the quiet, tail-wagging Sunny."

When she's not working with her clients, Gummere brings her work ethic to help address various community needs. She has been active in the Arizona Human Rights Fund (AHRF), the sexual orientation and gender identity committee of the State Bar of Arizona, the ethics committee of Hospice of Arizona, the professionalism course committee of the state bar, the peer review committee and the board of the Friends of the Phoenix Public Library.

Above all, Gummere admits that her biggest concern is making the "process as easy and painless as possible for my clients," which is why she's pleased to welcome her clients into the relaxed atmosphere of her office. She is rewarded by her decision to give the profession another shot every time she "helps someone plan for what they want to happen when they are no longer able to make decisions for themselves." She is pleased to give her clients the "peace of mind that their affairs will be handled quickly, efficiently and in the manner they have chosen;" something she wishes her patients could've benefitted from.

**Kathie J. Gummere, Attorney at Law • 1215 W Woodland Ave, Phoenix, AZ 85007
(602) 952-0293 • kathie@kathiegummere.com • kathiegummere.com**