



Rosalyn 'Sia' Baker-Barnes

Searcy Denney Scarola Barnhart & Shipley, P.A.



With immediate and extended family members heavily involved in the legal community, one may have believed Rosalyn “Sia” Baker-Barnes, a Shareholder at Searcy Denney Scarola Barnhart & Shipley, P.A., was destined to join the field, but becoming an attorney was not her first career choice. Growing up the daughter of a Judge and a mom who heads up the 15th Judicial Circuit Office of the Florida Department of Corrections, Baker-Barnes was interested in pursuing a much different career.

“I did not go to school with the intention to become an attorney,” said Baker-Barnes. “As a Communications major at Florida State, I wanted to be a news reporter – the next big thing on CNN or even ESPN, because I love sports. But, while interning for a Tallahassee television station, I witnessed a lot of tragedy and found my hands were tied. I wanted to do more for the victims than just report about it. So, I decided to go back to school to become an attorney.”

Honing skills she learned as a communication major, Baker-Barnes excelled in oral advocacy in law school at Florida State. During her first year, she argued a mock case before the entire panel of Florida Supreme Court Justices. So it came as no surprise that she chose to become a trial lawyer after graduation. Now in her

12th year at Searcy Denney, Baker-Barnes has ascended the ranks and earned a reputation in the community as an assertive litigator and steadfast advocate for victims’ rights.

“It may sound cliché, but I truly believe that my purpose in life is to help people,” said Baker-Barnes. “Victims of tragedy need me to be their voice and in fighting for them, I become an extended part of their family. Emotionally-laden cases such as these definitely take their toll on you if you’re doing it right, but if you’re able to help your clients put the pieces of their lives back together, the reward is priceless.”

Baker-Barnes recently represented two families whose children suffered brain injuries during labor and delivery. “The parents’ hopes and dreams for their children were dashed within minutes of birth when doctors said their children would never walk, talk or take care of themselves,” said Baker-Barnes. “The only way for the children and the parents to both have any quality of life would be with continuous nursing help for day-to-day activities. Advocating on their behalf, I was able to secure awards that have allowed the parents to focus on spending quality time with their children. Access to these resources has resulted in their children learning to walk, against the odds, and reaching milestones that the parents were told were impossible.”

Baker-Barnes is also a champion for her beliefs outside of the office. “At Searcy Denney, we have a unique opportunity to make a difference out in the community as well as in the courtrooms. I dedicate time to causes I truly believe can make a difference,” noted Baker-Barnes. Serving on the Board of Directors of the Palm Beach County Bar Association, Baker-Barnes co-chairs the Committee for Diversity and Inclusion where her goal is to educate and assist the legal community in hiring, retaining and supporting diverse lawyers. She is also heavily involved in The Links, Incorporated, West Palm Beach Chapter, where she has served as President, providing resources to under-served families in her community.

Baker-Barnes incorporates these values into her home life with her husband and two daughters, as the entire family is regularly involved in efforts to help the community.

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