



After years of specializing in health care law, Lynn Shapiro Snyder took a good, hard look at the industry she represents and concluded the following: Women in senior management positions might have cracked the glass ceiling, but not the “glass door” of corporate boardrooms, where a company’s most important decisions get made.

Taking matters into her own hands, Snyder, currently a 50-year-old senior partner in the firm Epstein Becker & Green, established a foundation in 2002 to help female senior executives grow in their careers and help them find boardroom seats. Called Women Business Leaders of the U.S. Health Care Industry Foundation, Snyder’s foundation “is all about increasing and leveraging women’s visibility. Women have to ask to be on a board; men don’t,” she says. “We have to ask. Otherwise, it won’t occur to the men that there are no women in their boardrooms.”

One of the leading legal experts in the health care industry and named one of the “100 Most Powerful People in Healthcare” by *Modern Healthcare* magazine, Snyder spends her days doing everything from representing pharmaceutical giants like Pfizer to helping hospitals comply with the law to attending health care business missions all over the world. She has authored two books and numerous articles, frequently works 12-hour days and says that her religious beliefs and values “ground her.”

“My Judaism teaches me to be transparent to others, to ask questions when I’m not sure, to be lenient and sensitive and to always keep in mind the big picture,” she says.

As to her passion for health care, “I can be blinded,” she admits. “If it’s not health care, I don’t have to pay attention. There is something contagious about using my legal acumen to improve the health care system and make a difference in people’s lives.”

Born and raised in New Jersey, Snyder grew up in her parents’ pharmacy. “It literally was a mom-and-pop operation,” she recalls of the days spent dusting shelves, typing up medicine labels and waiting on customers. “I loved the business.”

One of five daughters, Snyder knew what she wanted to

“There is something contagious about using my legal acumen to improve the health care system and make a difference in people’s lives.”

do with her life at an early age, thanks to her father who “had me make a list of everything I like to do. He took one look at the list and said, ‘Okay, you’re the lawyer in the family,’” she says.

Snyder grew up with all four of her grandparents and traces her strong Jewish identity to their influence, in addition to growing up in a kosher home. “My paternal grandmother used to say, ‘You’re part of the continuation of the Jewish story and you need to know what that story is,’” she recalls.

Following law school at George Washington University, Snyder joined her firm, became active in UJA-Federation’s Young Leadership Division and met her husband while planning a singles mission to Israel. “By the time the trip left, I wasn’t single anymore,” she says.

The mother of three children ranging in age from 10 to 21, Snyder prides herself on “making ice hockey games a priority” and striving for balance between her work and her family. “There are times in your life where family comes before work and times when work comes before family,” she says. “But for me, it was never an either/or question.”

An avid “list person,” Snyder’s current goals include joining “one or two more boards” and ensuring the growth and stability of her foundation. “I feel like I’m making good use of my time on Earth,” she says. “After all, you only get one shot.”