

# Real estate attorney sports a background like few others

By Brian Cox



Attorney Jackie Caroe prides herself on being forthright, trustworthy, and driven.

Her confident, commanding style has been a key ingredient to her success in a variety of pursuits, none more so than in the practice of law as an associate at Krevolin Horst, LLC in Atlanta, Ga.

On her office wall hangs a plaque that reads: “Not fragile like a flower. Fragile like a bomb.”

The roots of her directness and drive can be traced to growing up as the daughter of a mother who was a company executive and a father who was a transportation officer in the U.S. Army. Caroe’s mother led the development of the organic standards as the chairman of the USDA’s National Organic Standards Board, while Caroe’s father was a commanding officer for 24 years with multiple deployments during the Persian Gulf War and the Bosnian peace efforts.

During Desert Storm, while Caroe’s father was deployed, her mother was unofficially responsible for some 400 military families



**Jackie Caroe’s father was a commanding officer in the U.S. Army for 24 years with multiple deployments during the Persian Gulf War and the Bosnian peace efforts. Her background growing up in a military family has led Caroe to be active in veterans law.**

stationed at Virginia Beach. It was a difficult, uncertain time for everyone, and as the family of a commanding officer, the Caroes were expected to set an example of confidence and calm.

“My dad is my hero, and my mom is the woman I want to be when I grow up; my ride-or-die best friend,” says Caroe.

Caroe learned at an early age the responsibility of representing more than just herself and experienced the scrutiny that comes with leadership. She learned the importance of leading from the front.

“I will never assign anything to anybody if I don’t know how to do it or I’m not willing to do it myself,” she says. “I’m always in it with my team. I’ll never sit back and delegate. You have to be in it with your people and you have to know what they’re going through in order to be a good leader.”

The value of hard work and obedience was engrained in her. In a military family, she says, the response to the command “jump” is not “how high?”.

The correct response is to start jumping as high as you can. “And you do it to the best of your ability until you’re allowed to stop,” she says.

As for hard work, her father taught her that other people were working just as hard as she was and if someone worked harder than her, then she had no grounds to complain if she lost.

“There’s this idea that I can always work harder,” she says. “I never want to get to the end and think, if only I had done this better.”

Though the family moved every few years depending on where her father was stationed, Caroe spent her high school years in San Diego. She played volleyball (not well) and was into horseback riding (much better) and sailing. She’s been on sailboats all her life – she was only weeks old when she was first taken aboard her father’s 24-foot Hunter.

At University of California-Davis, where she graduated with high honors with her bachelor’s degree in political science and psychology (minoring in sociology), Caroe was a member of the equestrian team and a coxswain for the men’s crew team.

As coxswain, Caroe ran the crew members’ lives to a large degree, managing their practices and training, holding study

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**In addition to modeling and being a Red Rocker, Jackie was active in Miss America pageants for several years and was Miss Guam in 2013.**

lessons, monitoring their GPAs to ensure they were race eligible, and arranging travel to races. Caroe embraced the role, thriving on the control it demanded.

"The coxswain is the brain," she says. "I have to be smart. I have to know every other boat's race plan and execute my race accordingly. I have to know what every feeling in the boat means as well as my guys' tendencies. I had to know what every boat around me was doing, what my guys were doing – even though I couldn't see them – and what my guys were thinking and feeling throughout the race. Oh, and since I was the only person facing forward, I also had to steer the 60' boat."

Although Caroe knew she wanted to be a lawyer since she was in kindergarten, after college, she was eager to explore the world outside the military bubble in which she'd been raised. So, on her own, she headed across the country to Washington, D.C., where she secured work as a legislative correspondent on Capitol Hill.

She describes her eight years in D.C. as an adventure and a roller coaster ride.

She briefly considered becoming a lobbyist, but it took only a year and a half on the Hill for Caroe to determine she didn't like the flavor of politics. At the same time, she was introduced to professional cheerleading and beauty pageants. Caroe ultimately joined the Red Rockers, the cheer team for the Washington Capitals.

The image demands on Red Rockers were comprehensive and intense, tapping into Caroe's familiarity with the expectations that come with representing a larger organization. After a year, she spun her experience as a Red Rocker into competing in Miss America and Miss United States pageants where she mastered the nerve-racking interview process.

"Any interview after my pageant experience was a piece of cake," says Caroe, who was named Miss Guam in 2013.

Following that success, she was drawn into bikini modeling and bodybuilding competitions. At the same time, she was managing a pair of nutrition stores, working as a nutritionist, fitness trainer, and instructor, and as a cocktail waitress at Echostage in D.C.

Caroe says her experience as a cocktail waitress taught her more about customer service than any other job.



**Before going to law school, Jackie performed with the Red Rockers, the cheer team for the Washington Capitals.**



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**While living in Washington, D.C., where she was a legislative aide on Capitol Hill for 1-1/2 years, Jackie worked as a model and managed several nutrition stores.**

“You have to learn to stand up for yourself in a way that doesn’t offend people,” she says. “And working with so many different kinds of people, you learn it takes a different approach every time.”

As she approached her 30th birthday, Caroe returned her attention to her long-term plan to study law. She left D.C. to enroll at the University of Florida Levin College of Law, where she was offered the prestigious Governor’s Scholarship.

As with every endeavor she’d undertaken, whether it was bodybuilding or running a crew team, Caroe threw herself fully into law school, where she graduated magna cum laude.

“I don’t believe in working too hard,” she says. “I think if something has to get done, it has to get done.”

She was president of the Military Law Students Association and the lead student clinician of the Veterans and Service Members Legal Clinic. She wrote her thesis on the Law of Armed Conflict. She was the executive communications editor for the Florida Law Review and was a member of the Florida Trial Team. Her hard work resulted in her earning both the Pro Bono Excellence Award, the Outstanding Clinic Student Award, and Order of the Coif.

She secured a summer internship at Morris, Manning & Martin, LLP in Atlanta and joined the firm after earning her J.D. in 2021.

Caroe says that while she didn’t love her 18 months in Big Law, it was necessary.

“You learn a lot from extremely successful attorneys,” she says. “You have to go through the gauntlet and get your teeth kicked in.”

In 2023, Caroe joined Krevolin Horst, LLC as an associate in its real estate practice. The Atlanta law firm prides itself on attracting attorneys from top law schools around the country who have previously worked at large national or international law firms.

“One of the things that’s so interesting about this firm is that all the people here have similar experiences to me,” says Caroe. “The expectations are extremely high. We practice Big Law in a smaller office. And I’m going up against Big Law in almost every deal.”

The firm has grown from its initial focus on corporate law, commercial real estate, and business litigation to include technology, employment, intellectual property, whistleblower claims, white collar criminal defense, non-profit and education matters, crisis management, data breach and cybersecurity, election law, finance and lending, franchise, healthcare, mergers and acquisitions, and private equity/venture capital.

Caroe was drawn to commercial real estate and finance. On her office wall, she has a map of the U.S. where she checks off the states in which she’s executed a deal. Her ambition is to conduct deals in all 50 states.

“I love ‘dirt’ law,” she says. “I love buying and selling land. I love our clients. I cannot imagine doing anything else. I want to do what I’m doing now forever.”



**Jackie earned her law degree at the University of Florida Levin College of Law.**