

## We are CFS

By Crystal Faulkner (XVII)

Greater Cincinnati is our home, our workplace, our life. Cooney Faulkner & Stevens, LLC (CFS) is a privately owned family business deeply ingrained in the corporate, civic, multi-media, educational and philanthropic fabric of our communities. We are a professional certified public accounting and business advisory firm that continues to grow alongside our clients based upon principles of integrity, ethics and trust. We have been chosen as business partners by a select group of honorable clients to make their lives easier; consult on profitability and profit potential; enhance their business plan and growth strategy; and ease the inevitable transitions when they occur, personally and professionally.

A decade ago Tom Cooney, Chuck Stevens and I formed CFS. In 2006, Karl Dostal was elevated to partner, helping lead a complete staff of accountants, business consultants, tax experts and associated professionals. We have a unique set of skills and offer our clients a range of services from Business Valuations, Fraud Deterrence and CFO Outsourcing to Tax Planning & Consulting, Estate & Gift Planning, Financial Planning, Family Business and M&A.

We are very proud of the firm that we have built over the last decade – the wonderful clients and associates, as well as the relationships that we have built in the community. I believe one of our biggest successes is the impact that we have had on people. Touching lives and helping people reach their goals, whether financial or otherwise, is truly our greatest success. Our relationships with our clients and understanding their goals so that they can be more successful, the organizations that we are involved with in the community, the opportunities that we have given to our associates and their families, and the children and volunteers that have participated in Accounting for Kids Day (which we started in 2001) are all examples of lives that we have touched. As a graduate of Leadership Cincinnati Class XVII, it was critical that our firm mission statement include the importance of “giving back.” As leaders, it is our responsibility to do so.

When we started CFS there were only seven of us. Consequently, we all had many hats to wear. One of the greatest challenges we faced was creating a culture that was conducive to allowing our employees to grow personally and professionally, while at the same time being aware of and responsive to our clients' needs. However, the decision to start a new firm was based on the premise that we wanted to be a true advocate and advisor for our clients. We know that in order to serve our clients to the best of our ability we have to be accessible and able to promote individual growth, encompassing a balance of work and family life. We met this challenge by hiring employees who have the same beliefs and philosophies of client service and an entrepreneurial attitude and by being selective with the clients we engage. We want to work with clients who seek a true partner for their most challenging business issues – companies who are willing to open up their professional and personal lives to us so that we can really understand their visions and goals.

Building on the foundation we built during our first 10 years, we intend to increase our growth internally and externally within the next five years. To accomplish this, we will continue to improve processes and develop new ways to enrich the lives of our clients and employees. We have been very successful at developing niche practices and we've been able to differentiate ourselves because we blend technical expertise, creative solutions, and relationships of depth. We will continue to educate and challenge our employees to find new and improved ways to serve our clients and the community where we live work and play. I frequently think about a fundamental philosophy that we share with our employees and our clients – short-term successes are important but the focus should always be on long-term wealth.



**COONEY  
FAULKNER &  
STEVENS, LLC**  
Certified Public Accountants  
Business Advisors



Chuck Stevens, Tom Cooney, Karl Dostal and  
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