

Schedule helps build construction manager's career

A strict schedule. That's Jozette Darlece Daughrity's secret to maintaining work/life balance.

Daughrity is the single parent of children ages 3, 7 and 14. And she has another job that also is filled with responsibility: She's an assistant construction manager for the LR Development Co., which specializes in building residential properties in Chicago.

The manager clearly has plenty to balance. And she's determined to succeed. "Maintaining a strict schedule helps me have time for my kids and for myself," said Daughrity, who works at the company's Roosevelt Square affordable housing site.

"Being a working mom, I would never have enough hours in the day to complete what I want to do, so I put things on a schedule and get them done. It means I have time for my children, to be their backbone. I love them dearly and want time with them to help them with homework and to enjoy them."



Carol Kleiman
Worklife

Daughrity, 38, previously worked in a temporary job as an administrative assistant. She says it is her present job that makes her current balanced lifestyle possible, including going to her older son's basketball games.

"I implemented a daily schedule in 1998 after my second son was born, and it worked, but I needed a stricter schedule as my family expanded—and I also needed to make more money, to work full time and to not have to commute to work," she said.

Daughrity, who lives in subsidized housing on the West Side, learned about her present job, which is within

walking distance of her home, through West Side Chicago, a non-profit community organization. She was hired in 2004 and made the transition from office work to construction.

"I was always interested in learning construction and jumped when the opportunity was offered," said the manager, who has hands-on training and mentoring on the job and in January will attend construction management classes twice a week in the evening at Oakton Community College. She previously attended college part-time as a liberal arts major but had to drop out for financial reasons.

"Being able to be part of a building project from beginning to end and to know you helped make sure people get nice, affordable homes is a beautiful thing," said the manager, whose job as one of five project managers is "to make sure everything is correct."

Daughrity's brother and uncles are also construction workers. And her father, Joseph Daughrity, is a retired drywall installer. "He gave me a tape

measure as a gift when I got my job," she said.

But it is her mother, Curlie Daughrity, who showed her the importance of having a plan—and sticking to it. "My mom, who was an office worker, always had a strict schedule for the family and ran a tight ship," she said. "It kept us grounded."



Daughrity

And that's why she gets up at 6:30 a.m. every weekday. She wakes her youngest child, a daughter, first and then her sons to get them ready for school. Their clothes are laid out for them the night before and breakfast is at 7 a.m. sharp. By 7:20, Daughrity and her family are out the door, with nearby stops to leave her daughter at day care or at her mother's, and her sons at school.

Daughrity walks to work for her 7:30 a.m. to 5 p.m. schedule. After

work, she picks her children up, goes food shopping and has dinner ready at 6:30 p.m. promptly. "We always eat together as a family," she said. "The kids are in bed by 8:30 p.m. and I catch up on housework."

Weekends, too, are planned, with cleaning chores and occasional movies. "My sons put dirty clothes in the hamper and make their beds," said Daughrity, with a touch of pride. "They vacuum and clean their bathroom. My 3-year-old dusts but can't make her bed yet."

And just to make sure all work is completed, there is a schedule pinned to the refrigerator. "A strict schedule isn't only for me," said the construction manager. "It's also to teach my children to take care of themselves. That's my whole goal."

And she adds: "So far, so good." *Carol Kleiman's columns also appear in Monday's and Thursday's Business sections. Watch her "Career Coach" segments on CLTV.*
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