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Blum describes herself as a lawyer's lawyer. "I work with a lot of attorneys and service professionals, representing them as well as representing people they refer to me."

Occasionally, she even gets referrals from lawyers who lost to her in their own divorces. "They were so impressed with the job I did that they send me clients," Blum said. "If anybody ever needs a divorce lawyer, they don't say call my lawyer, they say call Stephanie Blum."

She credits her success to three factors. First, she guards her clients' privacy through protective orders and steering cases to mediation when she can.

Second, she prioritizes the children. "My parents had a high-conflict divorce, so I've seen it from every angle. So kids should be prioritized," she explained.

And third, she gets results. For instance, a few weeks ago she represented a man ordered to pay \$21,000 a month in child and spousal support. "I got that order changed to \$780 a month," Blum said. "Now that's a



Stephanie I. Blum

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result. You can imagine how unhappy the wife was." The case settled.

A couple of days later, she represented a husband whose wife was requesting \$68,000 in attorney's fees. "I showed the court that the mom was lying and the court gave her \$2,000."

She settles many cases, of course. "I'm smart enough to settle the cases that I don't believe I'm going to win in court," Blum said.

She's exclusively practiced family law for 25 years and started the family law department at her civil litigation firm.

In one current matter, she represents a mother living in France with her 12-year-old son. The father in California wants the son to live with him. Blum negotiated an agreement to have a mental health professional evaluate the son and determine his preference. In the meantime, "we're duking it out in two countries."

Another move-away sort of case was much more complicated. Blum represented a woman who had a child by each of three husbands. She wanted to move to Tennessee with her youngest child and current

husband, a Marine. "I had to strategically work it out so that she got custody of one kid and then use that and the newest baby to get custody of the second kid," Blum said. Winning required overcoming the recommendation of a custody evaluator and prevailing in a daylong argument session with a reluctant judge. "I was fighting on every front."

"I do get a lot of the tricky [cases]," she said. "When things are a mess, I get brought in to fix it and finish it."

— DON DEBENEDICTIS