

CALGARY COURTS CENTRE



Leah Hennel, Calgary Herald

Karen Molle has been in law for more than 20 years, first as a Crown prosecutor and later as a defence lawyer.

Defence never rests for top criminal lawyer

DARYL SLADE
CALGARY HERALD

Karen Molle always knew she was destined for a career in criminal law.

As a teen growing up in Victoria, B.C., she often read True Crime books, was fascinated and "just loved it."

But even after graduating in criminology at Simon Fraser University in 1985, gaining her law degree from University of Victoria in 1988 and moving to Winnipeg to article, colleagues tried to dissuade her from venturing down her chosen path.

"I was articling when my son Ryan was four months old and I was told I should pursue other areas of law," recalled Molle, who switched to defence work in 2006 after 17 years as a federal Crown prosecutor in Winnipeg and Calgary.

"In 1989, I was told criminal law was not the right place for a young woman with a family. And it was fairly exceptional then."

But Molle, who shares

a law firm with David Chow and Michael Kiss, has established herself as a highly-respected lawyer who specializes in drug, proceeds of crime, Charter of Rights and Freedoms and extradition cases.

She says about 80 per cent of her cases are referred to her by fellow lawyers, who recognize her areas of expertise.

Sports also plays a big role in the family. Karen met husband Bob Molle in 1986, following his rookie year with the Winnipeg Blue Bombers of the Canadian Football League.

Their son Ryan, 20, plays with Kootenay Ice in his fourth and final season in the Western Hockey League, while Sean, 16, is a high school football, rugby and wrestling athlete. Daughter Sarah, 18, is a fashion model.

Molle, who grew up with hockey, softball and running, now is "committed to yoga."

DSLADE@THEHERALD.
CANWEST.COM