

Q & A

Q & A with Denise Shafer



Q: What is your position with Primerus™, how long have you been with the organization, and what can members and clients come to you for?

A: I have only been with Primerus for a few weeks and am the new Member Services Coordinator. I will be working closely with the Primerus Personal Injury Institute members, as well as member organization such as the Marketing Partners and Staff Section and the Women Lawyers Section. I am eager to jump in!

Q: What was your very first job?

A: I was a front desk staff member at Court One Athletic Clubs in Lansing, Mich., where I would greet guests and check them in. I did this so I could pay for court time and get individual tennis lessons.



A visit to Ripley's Aquarium in Gatlinburg, Tenn. offered a photo op for Denise Shafer and her two boys, Preston and Garrett.

Q: How did your career path lead you to your current position?

A: Since I was in high school, through college at Western Michigan University, all my jobs have been in hospitality/customer service/marketing/sales. I put myself through college working as a sales representative at West Hills Athletic Clubs. I then worked for at Skanska International Construction Company helping write proposals and bid on construction management projects, then moved to a sales position at Cumulus/Citadel Broadcasting selling radio ads in West Michigan. For the past decade, I was a sales manager for an elite country club corporation in Grand Rapids.

Q: Who was your chief mentor and how did he or she influence your career?

A: When I was interviewing for a sales assistant position, she said it would be a waste of time, and that I needed to go straight into sales. Then, she gave me the Yellow Pages, and told me to start calling people. Radio sales gave me thick skin and pushed me out of my comfort zone. Sales also gave me an opportunity to meet and work with many different types of individuals; from owners to CEOs and presidents of major corporations. I've seen and spoken with many different people with unique backgrounds.

Q: What's the best piece of advice you've ever received?

A: "Surround yourself with people that build you up." - *Words to the wise from my mom.*

Q: What is one thing you would like to learn to do?

A: Play pickleball – want to learn what all the hype is about! I also want to play tennis on clay and grass, as I currently have only played on hard court.

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Denise and her husband Mark with the Smoky Mountains as a backdrop.

Q: What other career path might you have chosen?

A: Pilot – would love to get my pilot’s license eventually.

Q: What do you do to give back to your community?

A: I help out at my kids’ school as much as possible – going on field trips, being in their classroom, and helping their teachers with classroom projects.

Q: What is your most treasured material possession?

A: Probably the artwork my kids make me in school and bring home.

Q: What is your happiest childhood memory?

A: Going on the ferry to Mackinac Island, and visiting the Grand Hotel, riding our bikes around the island, and getting fudge with my parents and sister, Diana.

Q: What is your favorite movie and book?

A: Movie: Any romantic comedy (rom-com).

Book: Just started reading “The Alchemist,” which is great so far!

Q: What is the most awe-inspiring place you have visited?

A: Smoky Mountains National Park – hiked to the highest point, Clingmans Dome at 6,643 feet where we were able to see more than 100 miles of scenery.

Q: What are your favorite leisure time pursuits?

A: Travel – I love going to new places.

Q: What is your favorite famous or inspirational quote?

A: “You have power over your mind – not outside events. Realize this, and you will find strength.” - *Marcus Aurelius*.

Q: Who is on your guest list for the ideal dinner party?

A: All the U.S. tennis greats – Andre Agassi, Pete Sampras, Venus Williams, and Serena Williams.

Q: What are the top three items on your bucket list?

A: Go to Wimbledon, sit center court! Eat at Gordon Ramsey’s original restaurant in London (since I’m at Wimbledon already). Road trip to each U.S. state.



The Shafer family gathered for a photo at the Ark Museum in Kentucky, site of a life-sized Noah’s Ark.