

# Renae Reed Patrick

Blue Ridge Legal Services, Inc.  
Winchester

Patrick has not only devoted her career to serving the poor as a legal aid attorney, she has been an active and enthusiastic volunteer for advocacy organizations throughout the state.

**Looking back:**

I grew up in Martinsburg, West Virginia. Such a safe time – walking to elementary school with neighborhood friends and imagining that the alligators in the road would get you if you didn't walk up on the ledge behind one house, and having to climb the fence at another.

**An important mentor:**

Henry Woodward was the Executive Director of the Legal Aid office in Roanoke when I worked there. He is a professional, a gentleman, and a brilliant attorney who cares about his clients and bettering their lives by getting justice for them.

**Most meaningful professional/civic group:**

Being a member of various Virginia State Bar sections and committees where I have met so many attorneys who are willing to give their time and energy to the betterment of the profession; being in the choir and on the vestry in the Episcopal Church which enabled me to worship with caring people.

**An influential leader:**

Eleanor Roosevelt – a woman who didn't remain in the background behind her husband and who did not remain in the mold to which many women of that time were

relegated.

**Best advice:**

Read and study and do the best you can. Reading took me mentally to geographical areas outside the small town life in which I lived and gave me ideas of what I could do in my life.

**Personal/professional achievement:**

Being asked to be a substitute judge, even though I was a staff attorney at Legal Aid, which some attorneys thought was not quite as exalted as being a partner in a financially successful law firm.

**My first job:**

Working at the local Dairy Queen stand with women who weren't academically educated but who knew more practical ways of accomplishing the job or who could read people much better than I could.

**Best tip for balance:**

Saying no and using all those "paid vacation days."

**A favorite get-away:**

Home on a sunny day with a good book or visiting friends in the different areas in which I have lived.

**I wanted to be:**

I had no idea. I just enjoyed school and going away to college.

**A favorite book or movie:**

Any Agatha Christie with Miss Marple as the central character. She notices little things about people and can draw interesting analogies between the differ-



EDUCATION: BA, University of Colorado  
JD, William & Mary Law School

**You didn't know:**

I was the first female in my family to graduate from college and the first to get a professional degree. I lived in Edinburgh, Scotland, for two years and managed a small women's clothing boutique.

ent folks she encounters – while being dismissed as that "little ol' lady." Other people's preconceptions of her don't bother her – she just uses them to her advantage.