

Meet Michelle Cooper

RESIDENT AUTHOR AND PARTNER OF XML-W

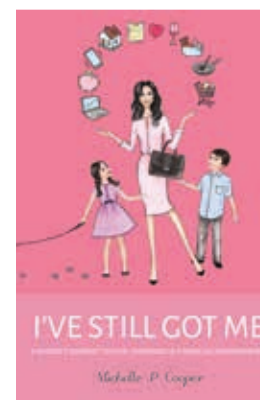
business beat

By Kim Duerr

When Michelle Cooper was 36 years old, she was happily married, a new mother to twins and had a thriving career – then her life was struck by tragedy. Michelle shares, “In an instant, my world was turned upside down when my husband of eight years unexpectedly took his life. I became a single parent overnight and was left to juggle the demands of raising my children and working full time. Because of the planning I had in place and my financial know-how, I was able to survive and eventually rebuild a wonderful life for my family. This journey and the life lessons I have learned along the way encouraged me to write *I’ve Still Got Me – A Widow’s Journey to Love, Happiness and Financial Independence*.”

In her book, *I’ve Still Got Me – A Widow’s Journey to Love, Happiness and Financial Independence*, Michelle combines her personal story of resilience with teachings of law and finance to help people achieve their own financial independence. Michelle says, “By sharing my story and bringing my challenges out in the open, I hope to draw attention to the common life events that we, as women, face along our life journey. Many of us are constantly juggling the demands of being a good wife, mother, employee, daughter and friend. We do this without putting ourselves first and this needs to change. It behooves all of us, no matter what age or stage of life we are in, to take action toward ensuring our own stability and financial independence. My book represents my passion to empower women by giving them insight and education so that they can feel financially secure and leave a lasting legacy for their family.”

Writing the book was very cathartic for Michelle, and she found the experience to be extremely rewarding. Michelle adds, “One of the challenging things about writing a book is the number of edits you have to make along the way even when you think you have ‘nailed it.’ The publishing process has been very educational for me. I had no idea how many steps were involved with publishing a book.”



Michelle says her mission is to share her story with other women who assume their futures will be financially secure no matter what happens. “My hope is that my book inspires people to take the steps necessary to empower themselves financially and live a healthy, secure life.”

Michelle is originally from Bethesda and lives in Avenel with her husband, Paul, whom she calls her biggest supporter. The couple has a blended family of five children – Gillian (22), Daniel (20), Alex (18), Chloe (15) and Alec (15). “Paul encouraged me from start to finish. I talked about writing a book for several years but never found the time or the desire to actually do it. Getting this project completed and off my bucket list has been very rewarding for me.” Michelle and her family have resided in the Player’s Gate section of Avenel since 2007. She says, “I love the walking trails, greenery and community feel. I also love the layout of Avenel and how it gives me space to breathe while at the same time being a short distance from Bethesda, D.C. and Northern Virginia.”

In addition to being an author, Michelle is the Director and Co-founder of XML-W, Women, Wealth and Wellness. XML-W is a division of XML Financial Group that focuses on the needs of women by taking a

holistic approach to wealth management. XML has been in business since 2004 when it’s founder left Merrill Lynch to create an independent financial planning and wealth management firm. As a fiduciary and registered investment advisory firm, the company puts the client’s interests first. Many of XML’s 18 employees have also had the unique experience of working in other financial industry settings to include traditional wirehouses and independent broker-dealer platforms.

When asked what brought her to the financial industry, Michelle says she was a business major at Miami of Ohio University before attending law and business school to earn a JD/MBA degree. She worked as an estate planning attorney before transitioning to a career in the financial industry. Michelle says, “I loved the change and never looked back. My career in the financial industry has now spanned over two decades.” Michelle’s book will be available this fall at Politics & Prose and Amazon.

You can connect with Michele at:
michellecooper.com
mcooper@xmlfg.com
XMLFG-W.COM



By sharing my story and bringing my challenges out in the open, I hope to draw attention to the common life events that we, as women, face along our life journey.



Do you own a business? Would you like a little exposure within the Avenel community? Let us help. Just email Rita.McWilliams@N2Pub.com to be featured in the next available issue.